This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

FL 1FQL D

Digitized by Google

FA 4175.2.2

TRANSFERRED TO
FINE ARTS LIBRARY

Harvard College
Library

FROM THE BEQUEST OF

Lucy Osgood

OF MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF

By permission of the Cosmopolitan Magazine.

Digitized by Google

JOURNAL

OF

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

A. D. HALL.

THE ONLY COMPLETE ENGLISH EDITION.

PART I.

CHICAGO AND NEW YORK:
RAND, MCNALLY & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS.
1908.

Digitized by Google

FA 4175.2.2

HARVARD COLLEGE
SEP 1893
LIBRARY

Lucy Osgood Fund

COPYRIGHT 1889, BY RAND, MCNALLY & CO., CHICAGO.

Digitized by Google

A MEMORIAL.

In every burning line, Marie,
I feel thy eager heart, and see,
As page by page thy thoughts unroll,
The strong, stern anguish of a soul.

Thou feltest in thy bosom rage
The fires of our self-torturing age;
Thy heart thou tookest in thy hand,
And curiously its pulses scanned.

Beneath youth's flames of high behest,
Like some slow crater from whose crest
A beacon flames—grew by degrees,
The eating fires of fell disease.

Pain, grief, despair, earth's utter woe,
Like us, poor girl, thy soul did know;
And while life called aloud to thee,
Didst note the o'ershadowing mystery.

Death spread his pinions from afar,
And thou didst see them blot and bar
God's cheerful sunshine, and didst greet,
With challenge brave, his onset fleet;

And while his cold, impending wing
O'ershadowed thee, unfaltering,
Didst carve on thine own monument
A name that Death could not prevent.

Oh, passionate heart! Oh, yearning soul!
No blank oblivion is thy goal;
What though we quail, and can not see
Beyond the veiling mystery?

Digitized by Google

Yet know we life's travail and pain
Not all a mock, not all in vain;
And tho' thou sharedst our age's woe,
Not utterly thy spirit's glow

Blind Death in Lethe waves could quench.
Like thee we note the doom, and blench;
Like thee we choke our sobs to hark
As children listen in the dark.

CHICAGO, December 10, 1889. G. B. H.

Digitized by Google

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Since Jean Jacques Rousseau published his *Confessions*, probably there has not appeared in literature a personal analysis so frank, honest, and merciless as this Journal of Marie Bashkirtseff. A beautiful, high-born girl, endowed with a passionate nature to begin with, thirsting eagerly for life and experience, feeling in her nature both the will and the power to place her name with the immortals, she received, at the very beginning of her career, the cruel *arrêt-de-mort*, and under the wings of the angel of death, carved, with unfaltering hand, on her own monument, a name that will live.

Her one fear, reiterated in every tone of passionate protest, was that, dying, she might be forgotten; and to defeat, in advance, the envious assaults of time, she studied, labored, suffered, laid bare her very soul for the world's perusal. In her own preface she confesses: "This is the thought that has always terrified me: To live, to be so filled with ambition, to suffer, to weep, to struggle; and, at the end, oblivion! oblivion—as if I had never existed!" And so, in order that her name may be remembered; that the story of her life may interest the curious at least, she takes the world into her woman's confidence, and, as she says, tells "everything, everything, everything! Otherwise," she adds, "what use were it to write?"

In view of her piteous appeal, and of the fact that to mutilate her journal by omissions, would be like cutting the details from a picture, the translator has conscientiously endeavored to render the young artist's thoughts as she wrote them,

Digitized by Google

omitting nothing, altering nothing, but aiding her to tell to her English, as to her French readers, "everything, everything, everything." Besides, there is not a page—it might almost be said, not a line—in Marie Bashkirtseff's journal that the reader can afford to lose. As it stands, it is an intimate record, tracing step by step the unfolding of a unique character; and in every word throbs an eager young heart, in every line beat the passionate pinions of a woman's soul. Grace to the dead! mutilated translations of the journal have been published, but the translator of this edition has not found it in his heart to resist the mute pleadings of that stilled voice, and so, with the best skill at his command, he has transferred to the following pages every thought confided by the author to her own journal.

A. D. HALL,
Translator.

CHICAGO, January 1, 1890.

Digitized by Google

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

What use is there in posing and deceiving? Well, then, it is clear that I have the desire, if not the hope, to remain on the earth, through whatever means. If I do not die in my youth, I hope to remain as a great artist; but if I die young, I wish my journal to be published, and it can not fail to interest. But, since I look for publicity, it may be asked, will not the idea that I am to be read, spoil, or rather destroy, the only merit such a book possesses? I answer frankly, no! In the first place, because I wrote for a long time without dreaming of readers, and for the rest, the very thought that I hope to be read, has made me absolutely sincere. If this book is not *exact*, *absolute*, *strict* truth, it has no reason for being. Not only do I always put down what I think, but I have never, for a single instant, dreamed of dissimulating anything which I thought might show me in a ridiculous or disadvantageous light. Besides, I find myself too admirable for censure! You may, therefore, be certain, indulgent readers, that I display myself in these pages *at full length*. *I*, as the subject of interest, may possibly appear slight to *you;* but forget that it is *I*—think only that it is a human being recounting to you all her impressions from childhood up. It will prove very interesting as a human document—Ask M. Zola, or M. de Goncourt, or Maupassant! My journal begins in my twelfth year, but has no significance until I reach fifteen or sixteen. There remains, therefore, a gap to be filled, so I will write a sort of introduction, which will render comprehensible this monument of literature and human nature.

Digitized by Google

Suppose, first of all, that I am illustrious. Let us begin:

I was born on the 11th of November, 1860. It is frightful merely to write it; but I console myself with the thought that when you read me, I shall certainly be no longer of any age at all.

My father was the son of Gen. Paul Grégorievitch Bashkirtseff, a provincial nobleman, brave, stubborn, unyielding—even fierce. My grandfather was raised to the rank of general after the Crimean war, I believe. He married a young girl, the adopted daughter of a very great nobleman. She died at the age of thirty-eight, leaving five children—my father and four sisters.

Mamma was married at twenty-one, after having refused several very good offers. She was a Babanine. On the side of the Babanines we are of ancient provincial nobility, and grandpapa always prided himself on being of Tartar descent, dating from the first invasion. *Baba* and *Nina* are Tartar words—to me it is all nonsense. Grandpapa was a contemporary of Lermontoff, Poushkine, etc. He was a Byronian, a poet, soldier, and scholar. He had been to the Caucasus. At a very early age he married Mademoiselle Julie Cornélius, aged fifteen, a very gentle and pretty girl. They had nine children—you will make allowances for the smallness of the number!

After two years of marriage, mamma took her two children and went to live with her parents. I lived almost always with grandmamma, who idolized me. Besides grandmamma, I had also my aunt to adore me, whenever mamma did not carry her off. She was younger than mamma, but not pretty, sacrificed by everyone, and always sacrificing herself.

In May, 1870, we went abroad, and mamma's long-cherished dream was realized. We remained a month at Vienna, intoxicated by the novelty of everything, the beautiful stores and theatres. We reached Baden-Baden in June, at the height of the season, in the midst of its Parisian luxury. The party

Digitized by Google

comprised grandpapa, mamma, Aunt Romanoff, Dina (my first cousin), Paul, and me, and we had with us a doctor—the angelic, the incomparable Lucien Walitzky. He was a Pole, free from extravagant patriotism, of kindly disposition, and winning manners, and spent his entire income on his profession. At Achtirka he was district physician. He had been a classmate of mamma's brother, at the University, and was always regarded as one of the family. At the moment of our going abroad, a physician was needed for grandpapa, and Walitzky was taken along. At Baden I made my acquaintance with society and high life, and there I was first troubled with vanity.

But I have not said enough about Russia and myself, which are the important topics. After the usual custom of the families of noblemen living in the country, I had two instructresses, one Russian and the other French. The first (Russian) of whom I have any recollection, was a certain Madame Melnikoff, a well-informed woman of the world, of a romantic disposition, and separated from her husband. She had made herself a teacher, on a sudden impulse, after the reading of numerous romances. She was regarded as a friend by the entire household, and all treated her as an equal. All the men paid her court, and one fine morning, after some romantic episode or other, she eloped. The Russians are very romantic. She might just as well have bidden us good-bye and gone away naturally. My simple-minded and theatrical family fancied that her departure would make me ill. During the entire day they watched me with pitying looks, and I believe that grandmamma even made me a special soup, of the kind given to sick persons. I felt myself growing pale under such an exhibition of sensibility. I was, for the rest, thin, fragile, not at all pretty; but all that did not prevent everybody from looking upon me as a creature that would, inevitably, absolutely, some day, attain the pinnacle of beauty, brilliancy, and splendor. Mamma once visited a Jew who told her fortune as follows: "You

Digitized by Google

have two children," said he; "the son will be like anyone else, but the daughter will be a star!"

One evening, at the theatre, a gentleman said to me, laughingly:

"Show me your hands, Mademoiselle. Ah! from the style in which she is gloved, there is no doubt that she will be a terrible coquette."

I was very proud of this for a long time. Since I began to think, since I was three years old (I was not weaned until I was three and a half), I have had longings after indescribable grandeurs. My dolls were always queens or kings; all my thoughts, all the conversations of those surrounding my mother seemed always to refer to these grandeurs inevitably approaching.

When I was five, I dressed myself up in mamma's laces, with flowers in my hair, and went in the drawing-room to dance. I was the famous *danseuse*, Pepita, and everyone came in to see me. Paul was almost nobody, and Dina, though the daughter of the beloved Georges, did not put me in the shade. Still another incident: When Dina was born, grandmamma went and took her unceremoniously from her mother, and kept her ever after. That was before I was born.

After Madame Melnikoff, I had for governess, Mademoiselle Sophie Dolgikoff, who was only sixteen—Holy Russia! !—and another, a French woman, called Madame Brenne, who got herself up in the style of the Restoration, and had an air of extreme sadness, with her pale blue eyes, her fifty years, and her consumption. I liked her very much. She taught me drawing; and, under her instruction, I made an outline drawing of a little church. I drew a great deal, and while the grown folks had their card parties, I amused myself by drawing on the card-table.

Madame Brenne died in the Crimea, in 1868. The little Russian, treated like a child of the house, was on the eve of marrying a young man whom the doctor had brought home

Digitized by Google

with him, and who was known for his numerous matrimonial checkmates. This time everything seemed progressing swimmingly, when, going into her room one evening, I found Mademoiselle Sophie, with her nose buried in her pillow, weeping desperately. Everyone hurried to the room.

"What is the matter?"

At last, after many tears and sobs, the poor child managed to say that she could never, never! Then more tears.

"But why?"

"Because—because I can not get used to the sight of him!"

The *fiancé* heard everything from the drawing-room. An hour later he strapped up his trunk, sprinkling it with his tears, and left. It was his seventeenth matrimonial failure.

I recall distinctly, her exclamation: "I can not get used to the sight of him!" It came so frankly from the heart, and I understood very clearly, even then, how truly horrible it would be to marry a man to whose appearance one could not grow accustomed.

This brings us back to Baden, in 1870. When the war was declared, we marched upon Geneva; I with my heart full of bitterness and projects of revenge. Every night before going to bed, I whispered this supplementary prayer:

"Oh, God, grant that I may never have the small-pox, that I may be beautiful, that I may have a fine voice, that I may be happy in my domestic affairs, and that mamma may live a long time!"

In Geneva, we staid at the Hotel de la Couronne, on the shore of the lake. I had a drawing teacher, who brought me set designs to copy; little *chalets* in which the windows were drawn to look like trunks of trees, and not at all like real windows of real *chalets*. So I refused to draw them, not comprehending how a window could be made like that. Then the good man told me to draw the window as it looked, frankly after nature. By this time, we had left the Hotel de la Couronne, and were living at a family boarding-house,

Digitized by Google

where Mont Blanc directly faced us. I copied scrupulously, therefore, whatever I saw in Geneva and the lake, and that was the end of it, I have forgotten just why. At Baden, there had been time to have our portraits made after photographs, and the portraits appeared to me overdone and ugly, from the efforts to have them look pretty.

When I am dead, people will read my life, which I myself find very remarkable. (Had it been entirely different I should probably think the same!) But I hate prefaces (they have deterred me from reading many an excellent book) and publishers' notices. This is the reason why I wished to write my own preface. I might have omitted it, had I published the entire book; but I limit myself to beginning at my twelfth year, what precedes, being too diffuse. Moreover, in the course of the journal, I give you sufficient glimpses of, and return frequently to my recollections of the past, *a propos* of anything or nothing.

What if I should die suddenly, carried away by some swift disease? Probably I should not know that I was in danger; they would conceal it from me, and after my death they would search among my papers; my journal would be found, and after reading it, my family would destroy it, and in a short time, of me there would remain nothing—nothing—nothing! This is the thought that has always terrified me; to live, to be so filled with ambition, to suffer, to weep, to struggle, and, at the end, oblivion! oblivion! as if I had never existed. If I should not live long enough to win renown, this journal will interest the psychologists; for it is curious, at least—the life of a woman, traced day by day, without affectation, as if no one in the world should ever read it, and yet at the same time intended to be read; for I am convinced that I shall be found sympathetic—and I tell everything, everything, everything. Otherwise, what use were it? Well, it will be very evident that I tell everything.

PARIS, May 1, 1884.

Digitized by Google

The Journal of Marie Bashkirtseff.

1873.

VILLA OF ACQUA-VIVA,
PROMENADE DES ANGLAIS, NICE.

January. Age, twelve years.—Aunt Sophie is playing on the piano some airs of Little Russia, and that has recalled to me our country. I am carried away by them, and yet, what recollections can I have of the country, unless they be of poor grandmamma? The tears are coming into my eyes; now they are there, and just ready to fall; they are falling already. Poor grandmamma! how unhappy I am to have you no longer with us! How you loved me, and I you; but I was a little too young to love you as you deserved. I am deeply moved by the recollection. The memory of grandmamma is a respected, sacred, beloved memory, but not a living one! Oh, my God, grant me happiness in my life, and I shall be thankful! But what am I saying? It seems to me that I am placed in this world to be happy. Make me happy, Oh, my God!

Aunt Sophie is still playing, and the sounds coming to me at intervals, penetrate my soul. I have no lessons to learn for to-morrow, which is Aunt Sophie's birthday. Oh, my God, give to me the Duke of H—! I will love him and make him happy, and I shall be happy, too, and will do good to the poor. It is a sin to think that one can buy the favor of God by good works, but I do not know how to express my meaning.

Digitized by Google

I love the Duke of H—, and dare not tell him that I love him, and even if I should tell him so, he would not care. When he was here, I had an object in going out, in dressing—but now!—I used to go onto the terrace in the hope of seeing him from afar, for an instant, at least. My God, solace my affliction! I can pray no more; hear my prayer! Thy grace is so infinite, Thy mercy is so great; Thou hast done so much for me! It grieves me to see him no more on the Promenade. His face was so strikingly distinguished among the vulgar faces of Nice.

Mrs. Howard invited us, yesterday, to spend the day, which was Sunday, with her children. We were just about to leave when she returned and told us that she had called on mamma and asked permission to keep us until evening. We remained, and after dinner went into the great parlor, which was gloomy, and the girls coaxed me so much to sing. They even went down upon their knees—the children, too; we laughed heartily. I sang "Santa Lucia," "The Sun is Up," and some *roulades*. They were all so delighted that they hugged me terrifically; yes, that is the word. If I could produce the same effect upon the public, I would go on the stage this very day.

It is so grand to feel that one is admired for something more than one's dress! Truly, I am enraptured with the praise of these children. What, then, would it be if I were admired by *others*?

I am formed for triumphs and emotions; therefore, the best thing for me to do is to become a singer. If the good God will only *preserve*, *strengthen*, and *develop* my voice for me, then I may achieve the triumph for which I thirst. Then I may have the satisfaction of being famous, known, admired, and in that way I might gain the one I love. If I remain as I am, I have little hope that he will ever love me; he does not even know of my existence; but when he shall see me in the midst

Digitized by Google

of my glory and triumph—Men are ambitious. And I can be received by society, for I shall not be a star out of a tobacco-shop or a dirty street. I am noble, and have no need to do anything; therefore, I shall have the more glory if I elevate myself, and shall find it easier to do so. If I should achieve that, my life would be perfect. I dream of glory, of celebrity, of being everywhere known.

When you come upon the stage, to see thousands of people awaiting with throbbing hearts the moment when you shall sing; to know, as you see them before you, that a single note of your voice will bring them all to your feet; to look upon them with a disdainful glance (I am capable of anything)—that is my dream, that is my life, that is my happiness, that is my desire. And then, when I am in the midst of all this, Monsignor, the Duke of H—, will come, like the rest, to throw himself at my feet; but he shall have a reception different from that of the rest. Dear, you will be dazzled by my splendor, and you will love me; you will see my triumph; but, indeed, you are worthy of only such a woman as I hope to be. I am not homely, I am even pretty; yes, rather pretty; I have an exceedingly good form, like a statue; I have fairly pretty hair; I have a very becoming coquettish manner; and I know how to comport myself with men.

I am modest, and would never kiss any man except my husband, and I can boast, besides, of something that not every young girl of from twelve to fourteen years can—of never having kissed nor been kissed by anyone. So, when he shall see a young girl at the very pinnacle of glory possible for a woman to attain, loving him since her childhood with an unchangeable love—a girl modest and pure—he will be astounded, and will long to win me at any price, and will marry me out of very pride. But what am I saying? Why may I not admit that he may really love me? Ah, yes, by the help of God! God has enabled me to discover the means of gaining my beloved—I thank thee, Oh, my God, I thank thee!

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, March 14th.—This morning I heard the sound of wheels in the Rue de France; I looked out and saw the Duke of H—, driving a four-in-hand in the direction of the Promenade. Oh, goodness, if he is here he will take part in the pigeon-shooting, in April; I shall certainly go!

To-day I saw the Duke of H— again. No other has his grand air; he carries himself just like a king, when he is driving.

When out walking, I have often seen G—,* dressed in black. She, or rather her make-up, is handsome, and her style is perfect—nothing wanting. Everything is so distinguished, rich, and magnificent, that one would really take her for a great lady. Naturally, all these things enhance her beauty; her house, with its *salons*, its little alcoves, with the soft light coming in through curtains or through green foliage; she, herself, decked, robed, got up as carefully as possible, and seated in a magnificent drawing-room, where everything is accommodated and arranged to set her off to the best advantage. It is perfectly natural that he should be pleased with her and love her. If I had her surroundings, I should be still more charming. I should be happy with my husband, for I would never grow careless of my appearance. I would adorn myself to please him, as carefully as I arrayed myself when I wished to win his approval for the first time; indeed, I can not understand how it is possible for a man and a woman to love each other constantly, and incessantly strive to please each other, and then neglect each other after marriage.

Why should we imagine that, with the pronunciation of the word marriage, everything is over with, and there remains only a cold and reserved friendship? Why profane marriage by picturing the wife in curl-papers, dressed in a wrapper, with cold cream on her nose, scheming to get from her husband money to pay for her clothes?

* The duke's mistress.

Digitized by Google

Why should a woman be careless before the eyes of the man for whom she should most carefully adorn herself?

I do not see how one could treat her husband as a domestic animal, and yet, before marriage, try to please the very same man. Why should not one remain always coquettishly attractive to one's husband, instead of treating him like a mere agreeable stranger, with only the difference that one can allow no liberties? Is it because they can love each other openly without crime, and because marriage is blessed of God? Is it because that which is not forbidden does not tempt? or because one takes pleasure only in things that are prohibited, and which must be concealed? Good heavens, this can not be so; I have a very different idea of all that!

I strain and lower my voice by singing, and so I have vowed to God that I will sing no more (a vow that I have broken a hundred times) until I begin to take lessons, and I have prayed Him to purify, cultivate, and strengthen my voice. In order to keep myself from singing, I have added a terrible condition—that if I sing, my voice shall be taken from me. It is awful, but I will do my best to have this promise kept.

Wednesday, December 30th.—To-day I wore an antediluvian costume; my little petticoat and black velvet casaque, and the sleeveless jacket and tunic of Dina's—it makes a good effect. I suppose that is because I know how to wear the dress and have an elegant figure (I looked like a little old woman). I attracted a great deal of attention. I wish I knew why people look at me, whether it is because I am comical, or because I am pretty. I would give a great deal to anyone that would tell me the truth. I should like to ask someone (a young man) if I am pretty. Perhaps, I like always to believe good things, and, therefore, would rather believe that it is because I am pretty. Possibly I delude myself; but if it be a delusion, I should prefer to keep it, because it is flattering. What would you have? in this world one must turn things to the best account—life is so beautiful and so short.

Digitized by Google

I form conjectures of what my brother Paul will do when he grows up; what profession he will follow—for it is impossible that he should pass his life like so many people—conduct himself properly at first, and then throw himself into the society of gamblers and loose women, bah! Besides, he has not the means, if he had the will. I will write him every Sunday, sensible letters, not filled with advice; no, but frank and friendly. Yes, I think I shall know the tone to take, and, with the help of God, I shall have some influence over him, for he must be a man.

I have been so preoccupied that I have almost forgotten (What a shame!) the duke's absence. It seems to me that we are separated by a profound abyss—especially if we go to Russia next summer. It is seriously spoken of. How can I believe that he will ever be mine? He thinks no more about me than of last winter's snow; I do not exist for him. During the winter, while we remain at Nice, I can still hope; but I fear that when we start for Russia, all my hopes must vanish—all that I dreamed possible will fade away. At the thought of losing all this, I feel a dull, steady pain, which is horrible. I am passing a moment of the greatest anguish, and my whole nature is suffering a change. How strange it is! just now I was thinking of the gaiety of the shooting-match, and now my mind is filled with the saddest imaginable ideas.

I am torn by these emotions. Oh, my God, the thought that he will never love me, kills me with desolation. I have no longer any hope, and was mad to long for things so utterly impossible. I wished for too much. But no, I can not abandon myself so! What! I dare yield thus to despair? Does not God, Who can do everything, watch over me? How dare I entertain such thoughts? Is He not everywhere, always watching over us? To Him all is possible. He is omnipotent; for Him there is neither time nor space. I might be in Peru, and the duke in Africa, and if He willed, He could reunite us. How could I, for a minute, think of despairing? How could I,

Digitized by Google

for a second, forget His divine goodness? Do I dare to deny Him merely because He does not grant at once all my desires? No, no! He is more merciful, and will not leave my beautiful soul to wound itself with wicked doubts.

This morning, I pointed out to Mademoiselle Colignon (my governess) a charcoal-seller, and said: "Look how strongly that man resembles the Duke of H—" She answered, laughing, "What a ridiculous notion!" It gave me an intense delight to pronounce his name. But I can see that if one never speaks to any one of the person one loves, the love grows stronger; whereas, if one speaks of him incessantly (which is certainly not my case), the love becomes weaker. It is like a flask of spirits: If it is corked, the odor is strong; but if it is open, it evaporates. It is exactly so with my love; stronger, because I never hear it mentioned. I never speak of it myself, and I keep it entirely to myself.

I am feeling so sad, because I can form no definite idea of my future—that is to say: I know what I would like but I do not know what I shall have. How gay I was last winter! everything looked smiling, and I was hopeful. I love a shadow which I shall possibly never attain. I am so distressed about my gowns that I have cried about them. My aunt took me to two dressmakers; but they do poor work. I shall write to Paris, for I can't wear the gowns they make here; they make me feel too wretched.

Evening, at church; it is the first day of our Holy Week, and I said my devotions.

I confess that there are in our religion, many things that I do not like; but it is not for me to reform them. I believe in God, in Christ, in the Holy Virgin, and every night I pray to God, and I do not wish to concern myself about a few trifles which have nothing to do with the true religion, the true faith.

I believe in God, and He is kind to me, and gives me more

Digitized by Google

than I need. Oh, if He would only give me what I long for so much! the good God will take pity on me. Though I can, if necessary, do without what I ask, I should be so happy if the duke would take notice of me, and I should bless God.

I must write his name, for if I never mention it to anyone and do not even write it here, I can no longer live. How I do chatter on! It solaces the pain if I can at least write it.

On the Promenade I saw a livery carriage containing a dark-complexioned young man, tall and slender. I thought I recognized a likeness to someone, and uttered an exclamation of surprise: "Oh, *caro*, H—!" They asked, What is it? and I said that Mademoiselle Colignon had stepped on my foot.

He is nothing like his brother; but, nevertheless, I was glad to see him. Oh, if I could but make his acquaintance; for, through him, I might meet the duke! I love him as my brother; I love him because he is the duke's brother. At dinner, Walitzky said, suddenly, "H—." I blushed in confusion, and walked toward the cupboard; mamma found fault with me for my exclamation, saying that my reputation, etc., etc., and that it was not proper. I think she suspects something, for every time anyone says "H—," I blush, or abruptly leave the room; but she does not scold me.

They are sitting in the dining-room, calmly talking, in the belief that I am busy at my lessons. They do not know what is passing in my mind, and have no idea of my thoughts at this moment. I must be the Duchess of H—; that is what I long for the most (for God knows how much I love him), or else a stage celebrity; but this career does not attract me like the other. It is undoubtedly flattering to receive the worship of the whole world, from the least individual to the sovereigns of the earth; but the other!—yes, I should prefer to have my beloved; it is entirely another sort of thing, and I prefer it.

Digitized by Google

I would rather be a great lady, a duchess in society, than first among the world's celebrities, for in the latter case I should be among an entirely different class.

May 6th.—Mamma, who was ill, had arisen already, and so had Mademoiselle C—. It was so fine and fresh after the rain; and the trees, with the sun shining on them, were so beautiful, that I could not bring myself to study (especially as I have plenty of time to-day). I went into the garden and placed my chair near the fountain, where I had before me so beautiful a picture—for the fountain is surrounded by great trees, and one can see neither sky nor landscape. One has in view a sort of brooklet, and rocks covered with moss; and all around one, trees illuminated by the sun. The turf is green, green and soft; truly, I was tempted to roll on it. All this formed a sort of grove, so fresh, so soft, so green, so lovely, that though I tried hard to fix my mind on study, I could not summon an idea. If the villa and garden remain unaltered, I shall bring him here to show him the place where I have so often thought of him. Last night I prayed to God, I entreated Him, and when I came to the point where I asked that I might make the duke's acquaintance, that this might be granted me, I cried on my knees. Three times already has He heard me and granted my prayers. The first time I asked for a game of croquet, and my aunt brought me one from Geneva; the second time I asked His aid to learn English; I prayed and wept so much, and my imagination was so excited, that it seemed to me that I could see an image of the Virgin in the corner of the room, who promised me what I wanted. I could even recognize the image.

I have been waiting an hour and a half for Mademoiselle Colignon—it is the same thing every day. Mamma blames me; she does not know how provoked I am about it. I am burning with anger and indignation! Mademoiselle C— makes me waste so much time by missing the lessons.

Digitized by Google

I am thirteen; what will become of me if I waste time now?

My blood boils and rushes to my head though I am quite pale; my cheeks burn, my heart beats, I can not keep quiet; restraining the tears which choke me only adds to my misery. All that ruins my health, injures my disposition, makes me irritable and impatient. Persons leading tranquil lives show it in their faces, and I, who am vexed every moment! By robbing me of my study hours, she mars my whole life!

With my sixteenth and seventeenth years will come other pursuits, now is the time to study. Fortunately, I was not placed in a convent; I would not be one of those little girls who, on coming out of seclusion, throw themselves wildly into the midst of gaieties, believing all that is told them by the fops of the day, and finding themselves disillusioned and disappointed in a couple of months. I do not wish anyone to think that once through studying I shall do nothing but dress and dance; no, indeed! Having finished the studies of childhood, I shall occupy myself seriously with painting, music, singing. I have much talent for all that. What a relief it is to write! I feel already more calm. Not only does all that injure my health, but also my disposition and my face. That flush which comes burns my cheeks like fire, and when calm returns, they are neither fresh nor pink. That color ought always to be on my face, but I am pale and worn. It is the fault of Mademoiselle C—, the agitation she provokes causes that. I even feel slight headaches after having burnt like that. Mamma blames me; she says it is my fault if I do not speak English. How that maddens me!

If he should ever see this journal I fear he would think it very stupid, my declarations of love especially. I have repeated them so often that they have lost their meaning.

Madame Savelieff is dying; she had been unconscious and speechless for two days, when we went to see her. In her room was old Madame Paton. Glancing toward the bed

Digitized by Google

I could distinguish nothing at first, then I saw the sick one, so changed from the strong woman we once knew; her face pale and thin, her eyes filmy, her mouth open, her breathing heavy. Everyone speaking in whispers, the doctors say she realizes nothing; but I believe she hears and understands all, though she can give no sign. She moaned when mamma touched her. Old Savelieff met us on the stairway; he burst into tears, and, taking mamma's hands, said, through his sobs: "You are ill yourself, you do not take care of yourself, don't you see, poor one!" I kissed him in silence. Then came his daughter; she threw herself on the bed, calling to her mother, who, for five days, has been lying in that state. To see one's mother dying from day to day!

I went with the old man into another room; how he has aged in a few days! The others have some consolation, his daughter has her children, but he is alone! To have lived with a wife thirty years is something. Has he been happy with her? but habit does much. I came back to the sick one many times. The nurse is quite disconsolate; it is good to see in a servant so much affection for a mistress. The old man has become almost childish.

Ah, when we think how unhappy is man! An animal may show the face he pleases, he need not smile if he feels like crying, he need not meet his kind if he does not wish; but man is the slave of all and everything.

And yet I inflict all those things upon myself. I love to go out and to have others come to see me.

This is the first time I went against my wish, and how often shall I be forced to smile when sad and heavy of heart, and to think that of myself I have chosen this life, this worldly life! Ah, but then I shall have no more sorrow when I am big; when *he* is with me I shall always be cheerful!

Madame Savelieff died last night. Mamma and I went to see her; many ladies were there. How describe such a

Digitized by Google

scene? Grief everywhere, to the right, to the left, above, below, grief in the flame of each taper, grief even in the atmosphere. All were in tears, Madame Paton, her daughter, had a nervous attack. I made her sit by my side, kissed her hands, and attempted a few words of consolation; but what can one say? Time alone may console! All expressions seemed insipid and out of place. I said the one to be pitied the most was the old man who was left alone! alone!! alone!!! Ah, my God! What is to be done? All must come to an end I tell her, though that is a theory which would not console me if one of mine should die.

To-day I had a great discussion with my drawing master, M. Binsa: I told him I wished to study seriously, to commence at the beginning; that what I was doing taught me nothing, that it was only a waste of time, and that I wished to commence by drawing as early as Monday next. It was not his fault that I was not taught properly. He supposed I had taken lessons before, and had learned to draw eyes, mouths, etc., and yet that sketch they showed him was the first I ever made, and all *by myself*.

This day is a change from the even, monotonous ones. At my lesson I asked Mademoiselle C— an explanation on arithmetic . . . She said I should understand without. I told her that the things I did not understand ought to be explained to me. "There is no *ought* here," she said to me. "There is an *ought* everywhere," I replied, "Wait a moment, I shall try to understand this example before going on to another." It provoked her so to find nothing impolite in my words. I was speaking very calmly. She steals my time; here are four months of my life lost . . . It is easy for her to say she is sick, but why wrong me? She spoils my future happiness, thus robbing me of precious time. Every time I ask for an explanation, she answers me rudely. I do not wish to be spoken to in that manner; she is irritable on account of her ill-health,

Digitized by Google

that makes her unbearable. At times, very much irritated and angered, a supernatural calm comes over me. Calm tones from me disappoint her, she expects explosions . . . "You are thirteen years, how dare you?" . . . "Exactly, Mademoiselle, as you say, I am thirteen, I wish to be addressed accordingly. Do not cry, I beg of you!" She went off like a bomb, saying all sorts of uncivil things, to all of which I answered placidly, provoking her the more. "It is the last lesson I give you!" "Oh, so much the better!" said I. As she was leaving the room I heaved a sigh, as if relieved of a hundred-pound weight. I was going, well satisfied, to seek mamma. She ran out in the corridor and came back again. I paid no attention; and we walked the length of the corridor to the room together, —she in the greatest fury, I with the deepest unconcern—I went to my room, while she asked to speak to mamma.

Last night I had a terrible dream. We were in some strange house. I, or someone else, I can not remember, looked out of a window. All at once I saw the sun growing so large as to cover half the sky, but it was neither bright nor hot. Then it came apart, one quarter disappeared, the remainder dividing itself into many-colored aureoles; then a cloud half concealed it, and everyone exclaimed: "The sun has stopped!" as if its natural function was to move. It remained fixed a moment, then the whole earth seemed strange; it did not exactly quiver. I can not express what it was, for it was unlike anything that ever could be seen. There are no words to express what we do not understand. Then again it commenced to turn like two wheels, the one within the other, the bright sun being covered part of the time by a cloud of the same form, or the bright sun and a dark cloud of the same form being alternately seen. There was general consternation. I wondered if the world was coming to an end; but tried to believe it would only last an instant. Mamma was not with us. She arrived in an omnibus and did not seem frightened. Every-

Digitized by Google

thing was strange, even the omnibus was unlike any other. Then I looked around for my dresses; we were packing our things in a small trunk. But it is all commencing over again, it is the end of the world. I ask myself why God has said nothing of it to me, and wonder that I am worthy of living to see this day. Everyone is frightened. We get in the carriage with mamma and drive away, I know not where.

What means this dream? Does it come from God as a precursor of some great event, or is it simply nervousness?

Mademoiselle C— leaves to-morrow. It is rather sad after all; parting is always hard, even with a dog that has lived with us. In spite of our indifferent relations, I feel a gnawing at my heart.

As we passed the Villa Gioia, the small terrace on the right attracted my attention. I remembered how, last year, on my way to the races, I saw him there with her. He was looking as he always does, imposing and easy at once, sitting with a cake in his hand. I recall so well all those trifles. He returned my look as we passed. He is the only man mamma ever speaks of; she likes him much, and that pleases me. She said: "See H— eating cakes; it is all right, he is at home." I did not then understand the trepidation which the sight of him caused in me. It is only of late that I can explain it, and I remember the least details concerning him, the most unimportant words spoken by him.

When Remi told me at the Baden races that he had just spoken to the Duke of H—, it gave my heart a shock I did not understand, and when, at those same races, la Gioia was speaking of him, I could not even listen. What would I not give now to have heard every one of her words? Then when I would go by the English stores he would look at me with a comical expression, as if he meant to say: "What a funny little girl? what can she be thinking?" He was right then, I did look odd in those little silk dresses; they were ridiculous. I

Digitized by Google

would not look at him, but his mere presence made my heart beat so hard it was painful. I wonder if anyone else ever experienced that; at times my heart beats so loud I fear it may be heard. I used to think the heart was but a lump of flesh, but now I know it is related to the mind. I understand now the meaning of the expression "My heart beats." I used to hear it at the theatre without thinking, but now I feel those emotions and I know them well.

The heart is a lump of flesh connected with the brain by a slight cord, the brain in its turn receives the news through the eyes and ears, but it is ever the heart which speaks, because the cord is touched and agitates it, causing the blood to rush to the face.

How time flies! In the morning I study a little; at 2 o'clock is piano practice. The Apollo Belvedere which I am copying has some resemblance to the duke, the expression particularly is very like him, the same way of holding the head, and the nose is just the same.

My professor of music, Manote, is well-pleased with me this morning. I played a part of Mendelssohn's concerto in Sol without one mistake. Yesterday was Trinity Sunday; we attended the Russian Church. It was all decorated with greens and flowers. Prayers were said in which the priest asked forgiveness for our sins, enumerating them all, afterward praying on his knees. His words touched me so I kept perfectly still, listening to and echoing the prayer.

This is the second time I prayed so well in church; the other time was on New Year's Day. Mass has become so insipid; things said in it are not of every day or of everybody. I attend mass, but do not pray. The prayers and hymns sung in it call no response from my heart or soul, they hinder me from praying in peace, while those "Te Deums" in which the priest prays for all, and each one finds his particular wants, fill me with devotion!

Digitized by Google

Paris.—At last I have found what I longed for without knowing it. To live in Paris is indeed *to live.* I have long been a martyr through not understanding what it was I craved so much. Now I see plainly I want to move from Nice to Paris, have an apartment, furnish it, to keep horses as in Nice, to go into society through the Embassador of Russia; there, that is what I want! But here is an idea which distresses me, I believe I am plain. That is frightful!

We were at the photographer's, Valeux 9 Rue de Londres; there I saw G—'s photograph. How beautiful she is! but ten years from now she will be old. In ten years I shall be a big girl. I would be more beautiful if I were taller. I sat eight times. The photographer said: "If I succeed this time I shall be satisfied." We went away without learning the result.

After our last errand in the city we returned just in time to leave.

A storm is raging, the lightning is terrible; at times it strikes in the distance and leaves a thin, silvery trace in the sky like a Roman candle.

Nice.—I look upon Nice as an exile. I must think of regulating the days and hours of my professors. Monday I shall resume the studies so viciously interrupted by Mademoiselle C—.

With the winter will come society, and with society, pleasures. It will no more be Nice, but a small Paris, and the races! Nice has its bright side, but for all that the next six or seven months seem to me like an ocean which I must cross, never for a moment losing sight of the light which is my guide. I do not even hope to reach the farther shore, I only pray for a sight of that land that alone will give me character and strength to live till next year, and then, what next!—Indeed, I know nothing of it!—but I hope, I believe in God, in His divine kindness, that is why I do not lose courage.

Digitized by Google

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day."

I can not express how moved I am and how much I acknowledge God's goodness to me.

Mamma was lying down and we all around her, when the doctor, returning from the Patons, told us Abra Morrich was dead. It is strange, incredible, terrifying. I can not believe he is dead. Charming and amiable people can not die. It seems to me that winter will bring him back to us in his famous pelisse and plaid. Death is horrible! I am really much grieved over his death. Such persons as the G—'s and the S—'s may live on, while a young man like Abra Morrich dies! Every lady is mourning over it; even Dina allowed an exclamation to escape her. I must hasten to write to Helen Howard. Every one was in my room when the sad news came.

June 9th.—I have commenced drawing. I feel tired, limp, unable to work. Summer in Nice is killing. There is no one; I am inclined to cry; in a word, I am suffering. We have but one life to live; to spend a summer in Nice is to lose half of it. I am crying now, here is a tear on my paper; oh, if mamma and the others knew how I feel about staying here they would not keep me in this FRIGHTFUL desert.

Nothing here reminds me of *him*, it is so long since I have heard of him. He seems dead to me. Besides, I am as in a mist—the past I can scarcely recall, the present appears hideous! I am quite changed; my voice is hoarse; I am plain, I used to awaken fresh and pink; but what is it that gnaws at me thus? What has happened, what will happen to me?

We have rented the Villa Bacchi. To say the truth, it is enormously hard to live there. For the *bourgeois* it is well enough, but for us—*I* am an aristocrat. I prefer the ruined

Digitized by Google

gentleman to the wealthy bourgeois. I find more charm in old satins, tarnished gildings, antique pillars and ornaments, than in trimmings, rich, gaudy, and flaring. A true gentleman will not pride himself on having shining boots and well-fitting gloves, not that appearance ought to be neglected, but there is so much difference between the carelessness of an aristocrat and that of a bourgeois!

We are going to leave this apartment. I am very sorry, not because it is commodious and handsome, but because it is an old friend to me, I am used to it. When I think I shall no more behold my dear study! I have thought of *him* so often here. This table, on which I am leaning, and where I have been waiting every day for all that my soul holds sweet and sacred! These walls my eyes have so longed to pierce, so they could wander far away. In each flower of the wall-paper I would see him! How many scenes I have dreamed in this study, where *he* filled the principal part. It seems to me there is not one thing in the world that I have not thought of in this little room, from the most simple to the most fantastic.

The first part of the evening Paul, Dina, and I spent together, then I was left alone. The moonlight was streaming in my room, so I did not light the candles. Going out upon the terrace I heard some distant sounds from the violin, guitar, and flute. I hurried back into my room and sat at the window where I could best hear. It was a beautiful trio. I had not for a long time listened to music with so much pleasure. At a concert we are more occupied with examining the audience than with listening; but, to-night, all alone in the moonlight, I devoured, if I may thus express myself, this serenade these young Nicenes were giving us. They are most kind. Unfortunately, the young men of the day do not care any more for such amusement, they prefer spending their time in the *cafés chantants*, whilst music . . . What in the world is there more beautiful than a serenade sung as in ancient Spain?

Digitized by Google

Upon my word, next to my horses, I would spend my life under the window of my love, and finally at her feet.

I wish I had a horse, oh, so much! Mamma and my aunt both promised me one. At night I walked softly into mamma's room, and, while full of enthusiasm, made her promise seriously. I am going to bed very happy. Everyone tells me I am pretty; truly I myself do not believe it. My pen will not write it. I am winning only, pretty at times—I am happy!

I am going to have a horse! Was there ever seen such a little girl as I am with a race horse? I shall be the rage. What color will my jockey wear? Grey or iris? No, green and pale pink. A horse, my own! How happy I am! What a girl I am! Why not let my overflowing cup run in that of some poor one who has nothing? . . . Mamma gives me money, I shall give half to the poor.

I have been arranging my room again; it looks better without the center-table. I have taken out of a box, long since forgotten, several knick-knacks, an inkstand, a pen, and two old traveling candle-sticks.

The world is my life; it beckons me, it waits for me. I would like to run after it. I am not yet old enough to go out in it, but I long to be there, though not through marriage. I only wish mamma and my aunt would shake off their laziness. Not the world of Nice, but of Petersburg, London, Paris; there I shall breathe at ease, for the annoyances of society are my delight.

Paul has no taste yet; he does not understand the beauty of women. I have heard him exclaim "beautiful!" of some who were actually ugly! I must teach him manners and ideas. I have not yet much influence over him, but I hope with time. . . . At present I communicate to him in an almost imperceptible manner my way of seeing things. I give him sentiments of the deepest morality under a frivolous disguise;

Digitized by Google

it amuses one, and is the best way. If he marries, he will love his wife, his wife only. Well, I hope, God willing, to teach him good principles.

Tuesday, July 29th.—We are on our way to Vienna; the departure was very cheerful, considering, I being, as usual, the life of the party.

From Milan the country is beautiful, so green, so level, that our eyes may wander indefinitely without fear of a mountain looming up like a wall to block up the view.

At the Austrian frontier I was dressing hurriedly, when the door was opened, and the doctor sprinkled some powder over us as a preventive against the epidemic (which I dare not name*). I went back to sleep again until 11 o'clock. I hardly dared open my eyes. What verdure, what trees, what cleanly houses, what charming German girls, what well-cultivated fields! It is ravishing, delightful, superb! I am not at all, as they say, insensible to the beauties of Nature, but quite the contrary. Naturally, I do not admire dry rocks, pale olive trees, dead scenery; but I love mountains covered with trees, plains, delightfully cultivated, or covered with a velvet carpet, peasants, women, scenery! I was never tired of looking out of the window and admiring. The express goes fast, everything passes, everything flies, and it is all so beautiful; that is what I admire with all my heart. At 8 I sat down, all tired out. At the station some little German girls screamed at us: "*Frisch Wasser! Frisch Wasser!*" Dina has a headache.

By the way, I often try to find out what it is that faces me, yet hides itself so well—truth, in a word. For all I think, all I feel, is merely on the surface. Well, I do not know, it seems as if there was nothing. As, for instance, when I see the duke, I know not whether I hate or adore him. I wish to see into my soul, but can not do so. When I have some difficult problem to solve, I think, I commence, it seems to me I have

* The cholera.

Digitized by Google

it; but just at the moment when I try to gather my ideas, it all goes from me, all is lost, and my thoughts fly so far I am amazed, and understand nothing. All I say is not from my inner self, I have none yet. I only live on the surface. To remain or to go, to have or to be denied, is all the same to me. My vexations, my joys, my sorrows do not exist. If I just think of my mother, or of H—, love enters my brain. And yet, not the latter, surely. It appears so incredible that I only dream of him while in the clouds. I understand nothing.

Some say that a husband and wife may seek outside amusements and yet love each other.

It is false, they do not love; for instance, see a young man and a young woman in love with each other, do they think of anyone else? They love, and find enough enjoyment in each other's company.

One single thought, one single look for another, proves that we love no more the one we once loved; for, I repeat it, if you are in love with one, how can you think of loving another? Well, then, what avail jealousy and reproaches? You weep some, and then console yourself as for the dead, thinking that it could not be helped. With one person in your heart, there is no room for another; but as soon as it is vacant another may take entire possession without much exertion.

Written in the margin under date March, 1875.—I reasoned quite wisely then; it is plainly seen I was a child. Those words "love" occur often—Poor me! there are errors in my French, everything would have to be corrected. I believe I write better now, but not as I would wish yet.

In whose hands will this journal fall? Up to the present it can interest no one but myself and my relatives.

I wish I could become such a person that my journal would be interesting to all. In the meantime, I write for myself. Will it not be a beautiful thing to review all my own life?

Digitized by Google

Friday, August 29th.—This morning I went to the fruit-market with the princess. She beat the merchants down, while I gave what was asked. I only go once in a while; why should I bargain? I gave a few sous to the children. Heavens! what joy it caused. They looked upon me as a Providence. I do not bargain and I give sous. One woman said: "How lovely you are!" Oh, if God would only look kindly upon me!

I come in the house, everyone looks at me—envies me. I have commenced to arrange my study hours—will finish to-morrow. Nine hours a day! Oh, God, grant me courage and energy to work! I have some, but want still more.

September 2d.—The drawing master has come; I gave him a list so he would send me some professors from the Lyceum. At last I shall commence work. I have already lost four months on account of Mademoiselle Colignon, and the journey—enormous loss!

Binsa addressed himself to the censor, who asks for a day. Seeing the note I gave him, he inquired: "How old is the young girl who is to study all this, and who can plan such a programme?" That stupid Binsa answered: "Fifteen years." I scolded him enough for it; but I am mad, furious! Why say I am fifteen? It is false. He excuses himself by pretending that, according to my powers of reasoning, I am twenty; that he thought he was doing well in putting on two years more; that he did not think, etc., etc. I charged him to-day at dinner to tell the censor my correct age. *I demanded it!*

Friday, September 19th.—I preserve my good-humor through everything. I must not be saddened with regrets. Life is so short it is best to laugh as long as we can. Tears come soon enough of themselves. Let us avoid them when we may. There are sorrows which can not be evaded, such as death or separation; but even the latter may be sweet if we only have hope. But the nonsense of allowing petty annoyances to spoil life. I pay no attention to those trifles, nor do I shrink from everyday *ennuis*. I meet them with smiles.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, September 29th.—Scalkiopoff has been here. I do not remember how it came about, but he says that men are degenerated monkeys. He is a young one with old ideas. "Then," I said to him, "you do not believe in God?" His answer was: "I can not believe in what I do not understand."

Oh, the stupid thing! All those youths who are beginning to grow a mustache think that way. They are little donkeys who think that women can not reason or understand. They look upon them as dolls who speak without knowing what they say. They let them have their say in a patronizing way. I said all that to him, with the exception of *stupid* and *donkey*. He, very likely, has been reading some books he does not understand, and quotes from them. He tries to prove that God could not have been the Creator because fossils and frozen plants have been found at the poles. So, those lived once, and now there is nothing.

I have nothing to say to that, but was not this earth disturbed with divers revolutions before the creation of man? We do not believe in the literal meaning of the six days in which God created the world. Elements shaped themselves through centuries, and centuries, and centuries.

But God is. Who can deny it, seeing the sky, trees, and man himself. Is it not plainly seen that the hand which guides, chastises, and rewards is that of God?

Monday, October 13th.—I was studying my lesson when little Heder, my English governess, said to me: "Do you know the duke is to marry the Duchess M—?"

I brought the book nearer my burning face. I felt as if a sharp knife had been thrust through my bosom. I was trembling so I could scarcely hold the book; I was afraid to faint, the book saved me. I pretended to look for something for a few minutes while composing myself. I was reciting my lesson in a choked voice; my breath was quivering; I gathered my courage as once before when I had to jump from the

Digitized by Google

bridge, at the baths, and said I must conquer myself. I wrote a dictation so as not to have to speak.

I went to the piano and tried to play; my fingers were stiff and cold. The princess asked me to go and teach her croquet; with pleasure, I replied, cheerfully; but with my voice and breathing tremulous. The carriage arrived, I ran to get ready; I wore my green dress; my hair is the color of gold; I am white and pink, pretty as an angel or as a woman. We started; the G— house was open; there were workmen, masons, who seemed experts to me; she has gone . . . where? To Russia, I suppose, to make a fortune.

One thought was ever before me—he was going to marry! Is it possible! I was unhappy, not as formerly, when grieving over the wall-paper of one room or the furniture of another; but truly miserable!

I did not know how to tell the princess that he is going to marry (they will know it soon and better I should tell her myself).

I chose a moment when she was sitting on a sofa, the light behind, my face could not be seen. "Do you know the news, princess? (We spoke Russian.) The Duke of H— is about to marry"—at last I had said it . . . without blushing, perfectly calm; but what I felt in my inner self ! ! !

Ever since that minx told me of that horrible news, I feel out of breath, as if I had been running a whole hour, and the same feeling makes my heart beat painfully.

I played the piano with a will, but half way through the piece my fingers weakened and I had to lean against the back of the chair. I commenced over again—same story—for five minutes, at the least; I tried again and again. Something came up in my throat which prevented respiration. Ten times I jumped from the piano to the balcony. What a state to be in!

We are going out, but Nice is no more Nice, nor G—, either. The view of her villa affects me no more. All that

Digitized by Google

relates to the duke and that is why my heart breaks at the sight of those two empty houses! He was all that attached me to Nice. I hate it now, and can hardly bear it. *Je m' ennuie! Oh je m'ennuie!*

Mon âme réveuse
Ne songe, qu à lui
Je suis malheureuse
L'espoir a fui.

My God, save me from unhappiness! My God, forgive my sins, spare me! It is all, all over; my face turns purple as I think it is all ended. I am a-weary! Ah, I am a-weary! My dreamy soul thinks but of him. I am unhappy—hope has fled.

I am happy to-day; the terrible news has not been repeated and I prefer ignorance to sad truth, glad to believe it could not be true!

Friday, October 17th.—I was playing the piano when the papers were brought in; I take up the *Galignani's Messenger* and the first lines which strike my eyes are about the marriage of the Duke of H—.

The paper did not fall from my hands, on the contrary it remained there as if fixed; I had not strength to stand, but sat down and re-read those crushing lines ten times over, to make very sure I was not dreaming. Oh, divine charity! What did I read? My God! What did I read? That night I could not write, I could only throw myself on my knees and weep. Mamma came in; to avoid her seeing me thus, I pretended to go and see about the tea. And I have to take my Latin lesson! Oh, torture! Oh, agony! I can do nothing, I can not rest. No words can express what I feel; but what overcomes me, maddens me, kills me, is jealousy, envy; it tears me, makes me wild, mad! If I only could show it! But I must dissemble and be calm, which makes me all the more miserable.

When champagne is uncorked, it bubbles, then grows still, but it only bubbles and does not become still if the cork is

Digitized by Google

but half removed . . . No, that comparison is not correct. I suffer, I am broken down!

I shall probably forget in time. To say my sorrow will be eternal would be ridiculous, nothing is eternal! But the fact remains that just now I can think of nothing else. *He* does not marry, they marry *him.* It is a plot of his mother's. (1880. *All that for a man I had seen a dozen times on the street, whom I did not know, and who did not suspect my existence.*) Oh, I hate him! I do not wish—I do wish to see him with her! They are at Baden, the Baden I loved so well. Those walks where I used to see him, those kiosks, those stores . . (*Re-read all this in* 1880; *it does not affect me at all any more.*) To-day I must alter my prayers in all that related to him, I will not any more ask that I may be his wife . . .

To part with that prayer seems impossible, killing! I cry like a fool. Come! come! my dear, let us be reasonable.

It is over, ah, well, it is over! I see now we do not do as we wish.

Let me prepare for the anguish of changing the prayer. Oh, it is the most cruel feeling in the world, it is the end of all! Amen!

Saturday, October 18*th.*—I said my prayers, omitting the prayer for him and for *all.* I felt as if my heart was being torn, as if I could see a beloved dead taken away in his coffin. As long as the coffin is there we are sorrowful, but not yet as much as when we feel the void everywhere.

I see that *he* was the soul of my prayer, for now it is calm, cold reasoning, while before it was quick, passionate, burning! He is dead to me and the coffin has been removed. It was a weeping sorrow, now it is a hard, aching pain. His will be done. I used to waft signs of the cross in all directions for him, not knowing where he was. I did not do so to-day, and my heart throbs painfully. I am a strange creature, no one suffers as I do, and yet I live, sing, and write. How I have changed since the thirteenth of October—fatal day! Suffering

Digitized by Google

is stamped on my face. His name is no longer a beneficial warmth, but a burning fire; a reproach, an awakening of jealousy, of sadness. It is the greatest misfortune which can befall a woman. I know what it is—sad mockery!

I must commence to think seriously. How I wish I could sing well! But what matters it now?

He was as a light to my soul, and that light has gone out. It is dark, dreary, sad, I know not which way to turn. Before this, in my slight annoyances, I could always find some ray of comfort, some light to guide and give me strength; but now, wherever I may seek, look around, and feel, I find nothing but void and darkness. It is terrible! terrible! when there is nothing in the depth of your soul!

Tuesday, October 21st.—When we came in it was already dinner time, and we received some chiding from mamma for having eaten before dinner. Our charming family interior was disturbed. Paul was scolded by mamma, grandpapa interfered—he always meddles, thus teaching him disrespect for mamma. Paul went away grumbling, like a servant. I followed grandpapa into the corridor and begged of him to interfere no more with mamma's authority, but let her do as she pleases, for it is a crime to prejudice children against their parents, just through want of tact. Grandpapa commenced to cry, that made me laugh; all these wrangles amuse me at first, then I feel sorry for those poor unfortunates who, having no real sorrows, make martyrs of themselves for want of something to do. Heavens! if I were only ten years older! If I were free; but what can one do when bound hands and feet with aunts, grandpapa, lessons, governesses, family? My grief is not sharp and mad any more. Without having weakened, it is more slow, calm, and reasoning.

No, no! Nothing is left me but remembrance. If I should lose that I would be very unhappy.

I speak in such a flowery style, it becomes stupid, and to think I have never spoken to him. I have seen him ten or

Digitized by Google

fifteen times, often from a distance or from the carriage; but I have heard his voice and I shall never forget it! The more I say, the more I want to say; yet, I can not write all I feel. I am like those unfortunate artists who conceive a picture above their capacity to execute.

I loved him and I lost him, that is all I can say, and that tells the whole story.

After dinner I sang, and charmed the whole turbulent family.

Saturday, October 25th.—Last evening some one knocked at my door and told me mamma was very ill. I came down half-asleep and found her seated in the dining-room, surrounded by troubled faces. I saw she was terribly ill. She wished, she said, to see me before dying. I was horror-stricken, but succeeded in concealing my feelings. It was a terrible nervous attack; never before had it been so strong. They had sent for Doctors Keberg and Macari; the servants had all been dispatched here and there for medicine. Never could I give you an idea of that terrible night. I remained all that time seated in an arm-chair near the window, there being many people to do what was necessary; besides, I do not know how to nurse the sick. Never have I suffered so! Yes, the thirteenth of October I suffered, but in another way.

For awhile mamma was worse. I could not restrain my feelings, and my first thought was to pray. Doctors came and went continually; they at last succeeded in removing mamma to her own room, we followed and stood beside her bed; but there was no improvement. . . . The remembrance of that night makes me tremble. The doctors said these attacks were always dangerous; but, thank God, at last the danger was passed. We then became quieter, but still remained with her. As the sea, after a great tempest, becomes calm and seemingly frozen, so we were all. To be seated so tranquilly, after such great troubles, made it difficult to realize all that had passed.

Tuesday, October 28th.—Poor mamma is no better. Those brutal doctors have applied a blister, which caused her much

Digitized by Google

suffering. The best remedy is fresh water or tea, it is both natural and simple.

If a man is to die, he will die with the care of all the doctors in the world; if, on the contrary, he is not to die, he will live, even if alone and without care.

Reasoning very calmly, it seems to me better to do without the pharmaceutical horrors. Oh, how I wish I were twenty years old! I am but a dreamer, without a future, and full of ambition. Such is my lot! such is my life! I had planned it in my thoughts. In one instant my hopes are dashed away. Although the duke is dead to me, he is ever in my thoughts. I am enveloped in clouds; all has become uncertainty, I can pray to God no more.

Paul will do nothing. He is thoughtless and will not study, and can not understand why he should do so. It grieves me Oh, God! endow him with wisdom, make him understand that he should be studious; inspire him with a little ambition, only a little, just enough to be something. Oh, God! Hear my prayer; guide him, protect him from the wicked who mislead him.

A man below my own social position will never please me, all persons of the lower classes *disgust* and annoy me. A poor man loses half of himself. He seems little, miserable, and looks like a trench-digger. Whilst a rich man, independently so, carries himself with a certain ease, an air of pride. Assurance gives him an air of superiority. I admire in H— that air of assurance, capricious, foppish, and cruel. He possesses something of Nero.

Saturday, November 8th.—We should not be seen too often, not even by those who love us. We must keep ourselves at a distance, abandon regrets and illusions; by such means we will appear better. We always regret what is past or distant, so your friends will wish to see you again, but do not comply immediately with their wishes; make them suffer; but not too much. That which costs too much loses value; after many

Digitized by Google

difficulties something better is always expected. Or cause them much suffering, more than enough . . . There you are queen.

I believe I am feverish. I am so talkative especially when I grieve silently. No one would suspect it. I sing, I laugh, and talk; the more unhappy I feel the gayer I appear. To-day I can not move my tongue and have eaten next to nothing.

All I write can never express my feelings; I am stupid, foolish, and grievously offended. I imagine I am being robbed when they take the duke from me; well, really it is as if they appropriated what belongs to me. What a disagreeable state! I do not know how to express myself, all words sound weak; for a mere nothing I use strong expressions, and then, when I wish to speak seriously, I am at a loss. It is as if—No, enough! If I continue to draw conclusions and give instances, I will never finish; thoughts spring up so fast, become confounded, and end by evaporating.

Looking at mamma as I would a stranger, just now, I discovered that she is charming. She is beautiful as the day, notwithstanding her many troubles and sufferings. When speaking, her voice is low and soft; her manners pretty, although simple and natural.

In all my life I have never seen a person who gave so little thought to herself as my mother. She is a perfect child of Nature. Should she give more thoughts to her toilet, she would be the center of admiration. Say what you will, fine dresses count for much; she usually uses odds and ends, or whatever she can find. To-day she wore a pretty dress, and upon my word she was charming.

Saturday, November 29th.—I do not have a moment of peace. If I could only hide myself far, far away! where no one could see me, perhaps then I could recover my peace of mind. I feel jealousy, love, envy, deception, wounded self-love, everything that is hideous in this world. . . . Above all, I feel

Digitized by Google

his loss! I love him! Could I reject all that is in my soul! But then, if I do not know what is taking place, I only know I am tormented; that something devours me, suffocates me, and all I say does not express the one-hundredth part of what I feel.

My face covered with one hand, while with the other I hold my cloak which envelops me entirely, even my head, I remain in obscurity, that I may gather my scattered thoughts; I am all confused. Poor head!

One thing troubles me. It is that in a few years I will have forgotten and will laugh at myself.

(1875. *Two years have passed. I do not laugh, neither have I forgotten!*)—All these troubles will appear to me like childish affectation. But no, I conjure you, do not forget. When you read these lines turn backward, suppose yourself to be at the age of thirteen, that you are at Nice, that this is taking place at this moment; think that it is a living reality! You will understand! You will be happy!

Sunday, November 30th.—I wish they would marry sooner; I am always so; when there is something disagreeable to take place, instead of putting it off I prefer to hasten it. To leave Paris, I hurried all the others. I knew I must swallow the pill. For the same reason I burned with anxiety to arrive at Nice; I could wait no longer. The suspense was more terrible than the event itself.

Digitized by Google

1874.

Sunday, January 4th.—How sweet it is to awake naturally! The rising-bell has not yet sounded, and I awake of own accord. It is as when on a ship we forget ourselves, and when we awake, find we have reached our destination.

Friday, January 9th.—Returning from my walk I was saying to myself, I will not be like those others who are comparatively serious and reserved. I do not understand whence comes this seriousness. I ask myself, how do we pass from infancy to girlhood? How does it come about? Little by little, or in a day? Misfortune or love are the agents that ripen, develop, or change. Were I sarcastic, I would say misfortune and love are synonymous. I do not say so, for love is what is most beautiful in the world. I compare myself to water which is frozen in its depths, with the surface alone agitated, for nothing either interests or amuses me in my DEPTHS.

January 11th.—To-morrow, the twelfth of January, is New Year's eve in Russia, and I am burning with impatience to tell my fortune before a mirror.

Aunt Marie, who has tried it, tells us of some astonishing revelations; she saw her husband and many other things not yet come to pass; she also claims to have seen many frightful and horrible things. Having resolved to try my fortune, I was so animated and agitated as the time drew near that I could not eat. . . .

At half-past eleven that eventful night I locked myself in my room, arranged the mirror, and behold!—at last I shall peep into the future. For a long time I saw nothing, but little by little I began to distinguish small figures, not larger than ten

Digitized by Google

or twelve centimeters. I saw a multitude of heads covered in the most fantastic manner imaginable; toques, wigs, bonnets of all sizes, all turning and whirling. Then I distinguished a woman in white, bearing a striking resemblance to myself. She wore a lace scarf over her head; her arms were resting on a table, one hand lightly supporting her chin; her eyes turned upward and she disappeared. Then I saw the interior of a church, the floor of black and white marble. In the center was a group in costume, several sitting or standing, I could not well understand. On the left, as if in a mist, were several men. One of these was in evening dress and beside him stood a bride, but their faces were invisible.

Another man stood in the center, but his face was also invisible. Covered heads predominated, and I believe all sorts of costumes changing very rapidly. The scenes were very brilliant. Suddenly the frame of the mirror, reflected again and again without end, seemed for an instant to assume the shape of a coffin, but I soon saw my mistake. You must understand that I was very much agitated, expecting every moment to see something frightful. To-morrow I will relate this to all my friends, for it is all quite strange. I might, no doubt, have seen more, but I moved my eyes from the mirror. Thus I have begun the year by meeting these costumes and head-coverings, which are inexpressibly strange and fantastic.

Welcome to the Russian year 1874, and farewell to 1873.

Thursday, June 24th.—During the entire winter I was unable to articulate a sound. Fearing I had lost my voice I was in despair. When spoken to I could but blush and be silent. But at last it is coming back to me—my voice, my treasure, my fortune! I receive it with tears in my eyes and humbly return thanks to God! . . . Although I bore this in silence I nevertheless suffered bitterly. I could not speak of it, but prayed to God and my prayer was heard . . . What happiness! What pleasure to sing well. We imagine ourselves all-powerful; we think ourselves queen. We are happy,

Digitized by Google

proud of our own merits. It is not the pride that gold or a title bestows. We feel more than woman—we feel immortal. We raise ourselves above this sphere, we ascend to heaven, to have everybody who listens to your voice hanging on your lips, to electrify, charm, and fill with enthusiasm. You reign supreme! Next to true royalty it is this power we should possess. The supremacy of beauty ranks lower, for it has not power over everybody, but the voice raises man heavenward. He floats in a cloud like that in which Venus appeared to Æneas!

Nice, July 4th.—The young ladies all went to St. Peter's Church. I prayed kneeling, my chin resting on my hand, which is very white and small; but suddenly remembering where I was, I withdrew it, and tried to make myself appear plain and penitent. I felt in the same humor as yesterday, and had clothed myself in my aunt's dress and bonnet. Coming out of the church we saw A— passing in a carriage; he raised his miserable Nicene hat.

As I could not go home in my present humor I led my companions to the convent opposite the church, which connects by a rear door with the house occupied by the Sapogenikoffs. On entering the convent we bring in so much folly and joy, that the sanctified atmosphere is troubled; the sisters, pale and calm, are pleased, and appear from behind every door showing faces full of curiosity. The mother superior, who has been here forty years, is also seen through her double screen . . . Misery! We afterward went up to the boarders' parlor, where I took Sister Therese by force and made her dance. She wished to convert me and praised the convent, and I, who also wished to convert her, praised the world. We are up to our necks in the Catholic religion. Ah, well! I can now understand how one may have a passion for churches and convents.

Tuesday, July 6th.—Nothing is lost in this world. If we cease to love one person, our affections are immediately trans-

Digitized by Google

ferred to another, sometimes without our knowledge. If we think we love no one, it is a mistake. If the object of our affection is not a man, it is a dog or a piece of furniture, and we love as strongly, only in another way. Were I in love, I should want to be loved as I love. I would suffer nothing, not even a word, from someone else. Such love is not to be found, therefore I shall never love, for no one will ever love me as I can love.

July 14th.—We have been speaking of Latin, schools, and examinations; all this makes me furiously anxious to study, so when Brunet comes I never delay him, and I ask him many questions about examinations. His instructions are so good that after one year of preparation I feel capable of presenting myself for the title of "Bachelor of Arts." But more of this later.

I have been studying Latin since February, we are now in July. Brunet tells me that in these five months I have done as much as is usually accomplished at the Lyceum in three years. This is prodigious. Had I lost this year I could never forgive myself. It would be the cause of such deep sorrow that I should never forget it.

July 15th.—Last night, returning from the Sapogenikoff's, I thus addressed the moon: "Moon, Oh, beautiful moon, let me see the one I shall marry before I die!" After this it is said you must not utter one word, and you will see your future husband.

What stupidity! I saw in my dream S— and A—, two impossibilities.

I am in a wretched humor, I fail in everything; nothing succeeds with me. I shall be punished for my pride and stupid arrogance. Read this, good people, and learn. This journal is more useful and instructive than all the writings that were, are, or will be. It is the life of a woman with all her thoughts and her hopes, deceptions, villainies, beauties, sorrows, joys. I am not quite a woman yet, but I will be. You may follow me

Digitized by Google

from the cradle to the grave; for the life of a person, an entire life without disguise or lies, is always a grand and interesting thing.

Friday, July 16th.—Speaking of the transmigration of love, all mine at this moment is centered on Victor, one of my dogs. I breakfast with him facing me, his kind, big head on the table.

Let us love dogs, and love dogs only. Men and cats are unworthy beings. Nevertheless, a dog is dirty; it looks at you with hungry eyes while you eat; its attachment is for food, yet I do not feed my dogs and they love me; and Prater, who has abandoned me through jealousy for Victor, has gone to mamma! And men, do they not also require to be fed,—are they not voracious and mercenary?

I evade my fate; I will not go to Russia, as I would not miss the Michael-Angelo Centennial for anything in the world. Russia will be as nice next year, but as to the centennial, one would have to live a hundred years more, and I have no such hope. But, then, if I do not go to Russia, it is that God wishes it thus. "*All happens for the best,*" says a Russian proverb. "*We can not escape our destiny,*" again says another proverb.

I shall again say to the moon: "Moon, Oh, beautiful moon, make me see in my sleep the one I shall marry before I die."

Saturday, July 17th.—They say that in Russia the rabble calls for communism; to divide and have everything in common. Their accursed sect has spread so far and wide that the papers are making desperate appeals to society. Will not the fathers of families put an end to this infection? Their wish is to destroy everything. No more civilization, no more art, no more beautiful and great things—simply common material for existence. Work is to be done in common. No one will have the right to raise himself above the others through any merit he may have. They wish to destroy universities, superior teachings, that they may reduce Russia to a sort of Lacedemonean cari-

Digitized by Google

cature. I hope that God and the emperor will confound them. I pray God to preserve my country from those ferocious beasts. D— seems impressed with all I say, and is astonished to find in me such an intensity concerning life. Speaking of our furniture, the description of my room nearly threw him off his balance. "Why," he cried, "it is a temple! a tale from 'A Thousand-and-one-Nights!' We should enter on bended knees. It is wonderful, unique, remarkable!" Wishing to find out my character, he asked me if I ever plucked the leaves from a daisy.—"Yes, frequently, to find out if the dinner is good."—"How can it be, a room so poetic, so fairy-like, and in such surroundings, to ask the daisy if the *chef* has made the dinner a success? It is inconceivable!" What amuses him is, that I assure him that I have a double heart. I took pleasure in astonishing him, and listening to his exclamations at such numerous contrasts. I ascended to heaven, and without any transition whatever, I returned to this earth, and so on. I exhibited myself as a person who wished to live and amuse herself, but does not suspect the possibility of loving. He was surprised, and said that he was afraid of me; that it was wonderful, supernatural, frightful!

What I love best, when there is no one worth being with, is solitude.

My hair in a Psyche knot, somewhat redder than ever. My woolen dress of that peculiar white, clinging and graceful; a lace scarf around my neck—I resemble a portrait of the first empire. To complete the picture, I should be under a tree holding a book in my hand. I love to be alone before a mirror, that I may admire my hands—they are so white, so small, and with a faint pink flush on the palms.

It may be stupid to praise one's self so much, but writers always describe their heroines, and I am my own heroine. It would, therefore, be ridiculous to humiliate and lower myself through false modesty. We may lower ourselves in words when sure of being contradicted, but in writing, everybody would

Digitized by Google

think I was telling the truth, and would believe me homely and stupid. That would be absurd!

Fortunately, or unfortunately, I believe myself to be such a treasure that no one is worthy of it, and they who dare raise their eyes to this treasure I consider as scarcely worthy of pity. In my estimation I am a divinity, and can not imagine how a man like G— can expect to please me; I, who could scarcely treat a king as an equal. I think, moreover, that this is all right. Looking down upon men from such heights, they think me charming; it is easy to despise those who are so low, and I look at them as a hare looks at a mouse.

Thursday, July 29th.—We were to start to-day. I underwent all the annoyances that accompany a departure—we lose our temper, we run, we forget, then we remember, we scream. I am all upset and now we speak of remaining until Saturday. Uncle Etienne wishes to put it off; he has no courage. What a character!

He intended leaving Russia the beginning of April and remained until July. So provoking, we have to stay. Seeing I am vexed, and say I will not go at all, they all bow down to me, and I am very capricious.

Monday, August 2d.—After a day of shopping, of seamstresses and dressmakers, of walking and flirting, I put on a wrapper and read my good friend Plutarch.

I possess a gigantic imagination. I dream of the past ages of gallantry, without perceiving that I am the most romantic of women and that it is unwholesome. I can easily forgive my adoration for the duke, because he is worthy of me in all respects.

Tuesday, August 17th.—I dreamed of the Fronde. I had entered into the service of Anne of Austria, who mistrusted me. I led her amongst the mutinous people, crying out, Long live the Queen! and the multitude repeated after me, Long live the Queen!

Wednesday, August 18th.—The day was passed in admiring me. Mamma admires me; Princess G— admires me, telling me

Digitized by Google

continually that I look either like mamma, or like her daughter, which is the greatest compliment she can bestow. We think more of ourselves than of anyone else. The fact is, I am really pretty. At Venice, in the great hall of the Ducal Palace, the painting on the ceiling, by Paul Veronese, represents Venus as a tall, blonde, fresh-colored woman. I resemble that painting. My own photographs can never do me justice—that incomparable whiteness, freshness, and delicate coloring, which is my principal beauty, is wanting. But if some one annoys me, if I am displeased with something, or if I am fatigued, farewell to beauty —there is nothing more fragile than I. It is only when I am happy and peaceful that I am lovely.

When tired or angry I am not beautiful, but rather ugly. I expand amid happiness as the flowers under the rays of the sun. I will be seen in good time, thank heaven! I am but beginning what I am to be at twenty years of age.

Like Hagar in the desert I await and I desire a living soul.

Paris, Tuesday, August 24th.—I hope to enter the world, that world which I call for so loudly on bended knees, for it is my life, my happiness. I begin to live and to try and realize my dreams of becoming celebrated; I am already known to many people. Looking at my reflection in the mirror, I see I am pretty. I am pretty, what more do I require? Can I not obtain all with that? Oh, God! in giving me a little beauty (I say a little, through modesty) it is still too much, coming from You. Oh, God! I feel that I am beautiful; I believe I shall be successful in all things. Everything smiles on me and I am happy, happy, happy!

The noise of Paris, this hotel as large as a city, with its people always walking, talking, reading, smoking, looking, makes me dizzy. I love Paris and my heart beats. I wish to live faster, still faster, faster. "I have never seen such fever of life," said D—, looking at me. It is true, I fear, that this desire to live by steam is a forewarning of a short existence. Who

Digitized by Google

knows? There, I am becoming melancholy—no, I do not want melancholy.

Sunday, September 6th.—At the Bois there are so many Nicenes that for the moment I seemed to be at Nice. Nice is so beautiful in September. I remember last year my morning walks with my dogs, the sky so pure, the sea so silvery. Here there is neither morning nor night. In the morning the sweeping and in the evening the innumerable lanterns annoy me. I am lost here, I can not distinguish the rising from the setting sun; whereas, below, in Nice, we are so well situated; it is like a nest, surrounded by those mountains which are neither too high nor too sterile. They protect us on three sides with a mantle which is graceful and useful. And before us we have an immense window, an infinite horizon, always the same and always new. I love Nice—Nice is my country. Nice has made me grow tall. Nice has given me health and a bright color. It is so beautiful. We arise with the morning, we see the sun over there to the left, behind the mountains, casting its rays over the silver-blue sky so softly, amid the vapors, that we choke with joy. Toward noon it is facing us, it is hot, still the air is not warm, there is ever that incomparable breeze to cool us. Everything seems asleep. The "Promenade" is deserted with the exception of two or three Nicenes dozing on the benches. Then I breathe, I admire. At night, again the sky, the sea, the mountains. But at night it is all black or dark blue. When the moon shines, this immense roadway in the sea seems like a fish with scales of diamonds, and when I am at my window, quiet and alone, with a mirror and two candles before me, I have nothing more to desire and humbly prostrate myself before God!

Oh, no, what I would say can not be understood; it can not be understood, because it has not been experienced. No, it is not that, it is that I am in despair every time I wish to make my feelings understood. It is like a nightmare, when we have not the strength to cry out.

Digitized by Google

Furthermore, no writing can convey the least idea of real life. How express the freshness, the fragrance of memory? We may invent, we may create, but we can not copy. Whatever we may feel while writing, nothing but ordinary words will result—forest, mountain, sky, moon; everybody says it alike. Besides, why all this? What is it to others? Others never understand because it is not themselves, but I, I alone, understand; I remember, and then the men are not worth the trouble we take to explain it to them. Each feels as I do for himself. I would like others to feel as I do; but it is impossible, they would have to be *me*.

My child, my child, leave that alone, you lose yourself in these subtleties. You will become crazy if you persist in this, as you did formerly about the depths of your inner-self . . . There are so many intelligent people! Well, no! I would say, that it remains for them to unravel! . . . But no! They know how to create, but to unravel—no, no, a hundred thousand times no! All that is clear in this, is that I am homesick for Nice.

Monday, September 6th.—In this state of stupefaction and incessant pain, I do not curse life; on the contrary I love it, and I find it good to live. Could one believe it? I find everything good and agreeable, even tears, even pain. I love to weep. I love to be in despair. I love to be sad and sorrowful. I look upon all that as so many diversions, and I love life in spite of all. I want to live. It would be cruel to make me die when I am so accommodating. I weep, I moan, and at the same time it pleases me; no, not that. . . . I do not know how to say it. . . . In fact everything in life pleases me. I find everything agreeable, and while demanding happiness, I find happiness in being miserable. I am no longer myself; my body weeps and laments, yet something within me, which is stronger than I am, rejoices at it all. It is not that I prefer tears to joy; but, far from cursing life in my moments of despair, I bless it, and say to myself: I am unhappy, I lament; still I find life

Digitized by Google

so beautiful that everything appears to me beautiful and happy, and I wish to live. Apparently that something which rules me, which so rejoiced in weeping, has deserted me this evening, for I feel very unhappy.

I have never yet harmed anyone, but I have been already offended, calumniated, humiliated. How can I love men? I detest them, but God will not permit me to hate. God has forsaken me; God is trying me. Ah, well, if He is but trying me, He should cease those trials! He sees how I take it. I do not hide my sufferings under the mask of a cowardly hypocrisy, as the rogue Job, who, while mincing to our Lord, made Him his dupe.

One thing pains me more than all else. It is not the collapse of all my plans, but the regret which this series of misfortunes causes me. Not for myself—I do not know if I will be understood—because it pains me to see stains accumulate on a white gown which should have been kept spotless.

Each little sorrow wrings my heart. Not from self-love, but from pity, for each pang of sorrow is like a drop of ink falling into a glass of water, it can never be effaced and joined to its predecessors, but it turns the glass of clear water to a black and dirty grey. You may add more water, still the liquid remains impure. It wrings my heart because each time it leaves a stain on my life, in my soul. Do we not always feel a profound sorrow when we see something irreparable, even if insignificant in itself?

Thursday, September 9th.—We are at Marseilles; the money has not come. My aunt has gone to pledge her diamonds, that I may not be delayed.

I feel nearer to Nice, to my city, for whatever I may say it is my city. I shall be at rest only when at Florence with all my finery. I have had my dress and hat brushed, and await my aunt to visit the city. I bought a novel; I do not remember at

Digitized by Google

which station. It was so badly written, that, fearing to spoil my style, which is already bad enough, I threw it out of the window and returned to my Herodotus, that I will read this instant.

Oh, what a beautiful result! Poor aunt! I throw myself at her feet. Where had she been? What people had she seen? And all for me! Not wishing to ask the coachman where to find the Mont-de-Piété, she asked him for the place where diamonds are stored for safety. We laughed together about this place where diamonds are kept. At 1 o'clock we leave this city which has so many bad odors.

From Antebes I made myself hoarse singing Nicene songs, to the great astonishment of the employés at the stations. The nearer we came, the greater my impatience.

Here it is, that Mediterranean for which I sighed! Its black trees; and just now the moon is lighting up this roadway in the sea.

Perfect calm. No noise of carriage-wheel, nor perpetual movement of men, who, from my window at the Grand Hotel, appeared like midgets. Calm, silence, obscurity, dimly lighted by the moon from behind the clouds, and but a few lanterns following one the other.

I enter my chamber—my dressing-room—I open the window that I may see the château, always the same; the clock struck. I do not remember the hour and my heart was oppressed with sadness.

Ah, I may well call this year the year of sighs! I am a little tired, but I love Nice! I love Nice!

Friday, September 10th.—(*Journey to Florence.*) The mosquitoes awoke me ten times in the night. I awakened a little pale but comfortable. Ah, the English know well the meaning of the word "Home." Be it what it may, home is the most agreeable place. It depends neither on its comfort nor richness. Look at our house, with everything upside down, scantily

Digitized by Google

furnished; disorder, desolation reigns; and still, there I am contented. It is because it is my home, my home, my home!

I do not even think of my dresses. I am pleased with everything. Oh, Nice! I did not expect to ever see it with such transports of joy. Had I been heard railing at it and cursing it from the time I left Marseilles, one would have said I detested it. It is my usual way to speak unkindly of the people and the things that I love.

I walked about the Promenade silently, pale as a shadow, recalling my scattered reminiscences. Nice, for me, is the Promenade des Anglais. Each house, each tree, each telegraph-pole is a good or bad souvenir, lovely or ordinary. It is like coming back from Spa, Ostend, or London. Everything is similar, even to the smell of the wood noticeable in new furniture.

I went up to my room, arranged my hair in the Empire style, and donned my white dress—the dress of the portrait. It is a long dress like that of statues, with the sleeves turned back above the elbows, cut low and round in front, also a little down in the back, enough to show the neck, with a broad band of *Valenciennes* lace falling over. The floating draperies caught at the waist by a ribbon, and on the breast two other ribbons looped and tied in front into a simple knot. No gloves nor jewelry. I am enchanted with myself. Under this white stuff, my white arms—oh, so white! I am pretty. I am animated. Oh, am I really at Nice?

Sunday, September 12th.—Night at Florence. The city appears mediocre, but the animation is great. At every street-corner, water-melons in slices, are offered for sale. Those water-melons, so red and so fresh, tempted me greatly. Our window fronts on the square and on the Arno. A programme of the fêtes was brought to me, this being the first day. I expected my cousin, Victor Emmanuel, would improve the occasion thus offered him—the centennial of Michael Angelo Buonarroti. During your reign "good for nothing!!!" And

Digitized by Google

you do not assemble all the sovereigns of the world and give them such a celebration as they have never witnessed! And you make no fuss! Oh, king! your son, your grandsons and their sons will reign and not have this opportunity. Oh, big mass of flesh! Oh, king without ambition, without self-respect! There are many meetings of all sorts; concerts, illuminations, a ball at the Casino, the ex-Borghese palace, but no king! . . . Nothing as I would like it. Nothing as I would wish it.

Monday, September 13th.—Let me see, I must collect my ideas. The more I have to tell, the less I write. . . . It is because I am impatient and nervous when I have much to say.

In evening dresses, we drove through the entire city in a landau. Oh, how I love those sombre houses, those porticoes, those columns, and that architecture so massive and grand! Shame on you architects—French, Russian, and English—hide yourselves beneath the ground "cardboard palaces" of Paris; sink, disappear under the earth—not the Louvre, that is beyond criticism, but the rest. Never can they attain that superb magnificence which belongs to Italians. I opened my eyes wide when I saw those immense stones of the Palazzo Pitti. The city is dirty, almost squalid; but how many beauties it contains! Oh, city of Dante, of the Médicis, of Savonarola! How full of superb memories for those who think, who feel, who know! What masterpieces! What ruins! Oh, worthless king! Oh, were I a queen!

I adore painting, sculpture, art, wherever it may be found. I could spend entire days in these galleries, but my aunt was suffering and could hardly follow me, so I sacrificed myself. However, life is before me, I will have time to see them again.

At the Palazzo Pitti I did not see a single costume to copy; but what beauty, what paintings! Must I say it? I do not dare—everyone will cry out "Shame! Shame!" Well, confi-

Digitized by Google

dentially, I don't like Raphael's "Madonna della Sedia." The face of the Virgin is pale, the complexion unnatural, the expression is that of a "chamber-maid" rather than of the Holy Virgin, Mother of Jesus. But there is one picture I found charming—the "Magdalen," by Titian. Only—there is always an only—her wrists are too big, and her hands too plump—beautiful hands they would be for a woman of fifty. There are some things by Rubens and Van Dyck which are exquisite. The "Mensonge," by Salvator Rosa, is very natural, very good. I do not judge as a connoisseur. What pleases me best is what is most like nature. Is it not the object of painting to imitate nature?

I admire greatly the fresh, plump face of Paolo Veronese's wife, painted by himself. I like the style of his faces. I adore Titian and Van Dyck, but poor Raphael! I do not criticise Raphael, I do not understand him; with time, no doubt, I shall understand the beauty of his works. Nevertheless, the portrait of Pope Leo—I do not know which—X, I think, is admirable.

The "Virgin with the Infant Jesus," of Murillo, attracted my attention; it is so fresh, so natural.

To my great satisfaction I found the gallery of paintings smaller than I expected. It is killing to go through those endless galleries—labyrinths more terrible than that of Crete.

I spent two hours at the palace, I did not sit down an instant, and I am not tired. . . . Things I love do not tire me. As long as there are paintings, and especially statues, to see, I am of iron. Ah, if I had to walk through the stores of the Louvre, or of the Bon-Marché, or even Worth's, I should cry in three-quarters of an hour.

No journey ever pleased me so much as this one. At last, I see something worth seeing. I adore those sombre, *strozzi* palaces; I adore those immense entrances, their superb courts, their galleries, their colonnades. They are majestic, they are grand, they are beautiful! Ah, the world is degenerating, we

Digitized by Google

feel like sinking into the earth when we compare modern structures to these gigantic stones piled one on the other, and mounting upward to the sky. We pass over bridges of prodigious height connecting the palaces.

Oh, my child, save your expressions, what will you say of Rome?

Digitized by Google

1875.

Nice, Thursday, September 30th.—I went down into my laboratory, and oh, horror! all my vials, all my parcels, all my crystals, all my acids, all my tubes, opened, thrown together in a dirty box, and in the utmost disorder. I was furious. I sat on the floor and finished breaking what was already half destroyed. I did not touch what remained intact, I never forget myself.

Ah, so you thought Marie was gone, that she was dead! "You may break everything, scatter everything," cried I, still destroying.

My aunt, at first, kept silent, then said:

"Can this be a young girl? It is a monster, a horror!"

In the midst of my rage I could not help smiling, for the whole matter was all on the exterior, it was not within me. At this moment I have the happiness to be myself once more, therefore, I am perfectly tranquil and look upon it all as if it concerned someone else.

Friday, October 1st.—God will not grant my prayer. I am resigned (not at all, I wait). Oh, how tiresome it is to wait and be unable to do anything but wait. These vexations and strifes with our surroundings all leave their traces on a woman.

"If man, from the hour of his birth and in his first movements, did not meet with resistance, when coming in contact with things around him, he would soon lose his identity and believe the outside world to be part of himself, of his body. At every gesture, every step attained, he would become persuaded that all is but a dependence and an extension of his

Digitized by Google

personal being. He would exclaim with confidence: 'The universe is mine!'"

You may reasonably say this is too good to be mine. I will not try to make you believe it. A philosopher has said it and I repeat it. Ah, well! that is how I dreamed of living; but contact with the things around me has given me the blues, at which I am excessively angry.

All persons who please me I have dared compare with the duke. It is strange. Ah, well, on all occasions he returns to me plainly and I thank God for it, for He is my light. Oh, what a difference! How I remember! All my happiness consisted in a glimpse of him. I would remain on the terrace, sometimes I would see him pass by, and then I would return to the house almost crazy. I would throw myself into the arms of Colignon, hiding my face on her bosom. She would not stop me; but raise me gently and conduct me to my lesson, still quite dizzy, drunk with happiness.

Oh, how well I understand that expression, "drunk with happiness," for I was really so! I never looked upon him as an equal. I never seriously thought of knowing him. To see him—to see him again, that was all I asked. I love him still, and I shall love him always.

How good it is to speak of him! How pure is the recollection! In thinking of him, I leave this low Nice behind me, I elevate myself, I love. When I think of this I can not write much; I think, I love, and that is all.

Disorder in the house is a great vexation to me, details of service, rooms without furniture, that air of devastation, of misery, breaks my heart! God have pity upon me and help me to arrange matters. I am alone. As to my aunt she is indifferent; the house may fall, the garden wither . . . I do not even mention the details . . . As for me, those neglected details make me nervous and spoil my temper.

Digitized by Google

When all is beautiful, comfortable, and rich—I am good, gay, and well; but desolation and emptiness leave me desolate and useless. The swallow builds its nest, the lion his lair, how is it that man who is far superior to animals will do nothing?

If I say, far superior, it is not that I esteem man; no, I despise men profoundly and from conviction. I expect nothing good of them. They have not what I seek and hope for—a good and perfect soul. Those who are good are stupid, and those who are intelligent are either schemers, or too much occupied with their intellect to be good. Moreover, each creature is essentially selfish; seek for goodness in a selfish man, you will find interest, deceit, intrigue, envy! Happy are they who have ambition, it is a noble passion; through vanity and ambition we strive to appear good before others, and, if only momentary, it is better than never.

Ah, well, my child, have you exhausted all your science? For the moment, yes. Thus, at least, I shall have fewer deceptions! No baseness will grieve me, no villainous action will surprise me. The day will undoubtedly come when I shall think I have found a man, but on that day I shall be sadly mistaken. I well foresee the day I shall be blinded; I can say that now while my vision is clear. But, then, why do I live, since all is villainy and rascality in this world? Why? Because I understand that it is so. Because, whatever we may say, life is a very beautiful thing; and because, if we do not analyze too deeply, we may live happily. To believe neither in friendship, nor gratitude, nor fidelity, nor honesty; to raise ourselves bravely above human miseries and stop between them and God; to take all we can from life, and quickly; to do no harm to our neighbors, not to lose one instant of pleasure; to arrange for ourselves a useful, brilliant, and magnificent life; to raise ourselves as much as possible above others; to be powerful—yes, powerful! powerful! by any means—then we are feared and respected; then we are strong, and that is the sum-

Digitized by Google

mit of human felicity, for then our neighbors are muzzled, through cowardice or other causes, and they can not bite.

Is it not strange to hear me reason thus? Yes, but this style of reasoning in a young creature like me is only a new proof of the worthlessness of the world. It must be much imbued with impurity and wickedness, to have saddened me thus in so short a time; I am only fifteen.

And this proves the divine mercy of God, for when I shall be completely initiated into the hideousness of this world, I shall see that there is only He above in heaven, and I below, on this earth. That conviction will give me a much greater strength. I shall touch on vulgar things, only to elevate myself; and I will be happy when I do not take to heart the littleness around which men revolve, fight, devour, and tear each other like hungry dogs.

What profusion of words! And when shall I elevate myself? And how? Oh, what visions!

I elevate myself mentally, always mentally; my soul is great. I am capable of immense things; but how will it serve me, since I live in an obscure corner, ignored by all?

There, you see, I do think something of my worthless fellow-beings; but I have never disdained them; on the contrary, I court them. Without them there is nothing in the world. Only, only, I value them at their worth and wish to make use of them.

The multitude is everything. What matters a few superior beings? I must have all the world; I must have noise, fame.

When I think that—Let us return to that eternally tiresome and necessary word—wait! Ah, if one only knew how much it costs me to wait!

But I love life, I love its annoyances and its joys. I love God and I love His people, with all their wickedness, and in spite of all their wickedness, and, perhaps, even because of all their wickedness.

Digitized by Google

It is still pleasant, the air is soft, the moon is bright, the trees are dark. Nice is beautiful. I prefer the view from my window to any other in the world, it is fine; but it is also sad, sad, sad.

I shall read a little, then I shall continue my cerebral romance.

Why can I not speak without exaggeration? My dark reflections, if somewhat calmer, would be more just; their violent form makes them unnatural.

There are peaceful souls, there are beautiful deeds, and there are honest hearts; but they are so rarely to be met with that we must not confound them with the rest of the world.

It may be said, perhaps, that I have these ideas, because I am vexed by something; but no, I have only my usual vexations, and none in particular. Do not think there is anything beneath what is written in this journal. I am conscientious and do not let a single thought or doubt pass in silence. I reproduce myself as faithfully as my poor intellect will permit me, and if I am not believed, if something is looked for beyond or within what I have said, so much the worse. Nothing will be found, for there is nothing.

Saturday, October 9th.—Had I been born a Princess de Bourbon, like Madame de Longueville; had I counts for servants, kings for relations and friends; had I never walked save on heraldic emblems, and slept under royal canopies; had I a long line of ancestors, each one greater and prouder than the other; had I all this, I believe I could not be prouder nor more haughty than I am.

Oh, my God, how much I thank Thee! These thoughts which come from You, will keep me in the right path, and will not allow me to lose sight of that luminous star toward which I am moving.

I believe I am not moving at all just now, but I shall move, and for so slight a reason it is not worth while to change such a beautiful sentence as the above.

Digitized by Google

Ah, I am tired of my obscurity! I rust of inaction, I wither in the shade. The sun, the sun, the sun!

From what side will it come to me? When? where? how? I do not care to know, provided it comes.

In my moments of thirst for greatness, all objects seem unworthy to be touched; my pen refuses to write a commonplace word. I look upon my surroundings with supernatural disdain and say to myself, sighing: "Come, courage, the present is but a passage leading to where all will be well."

Friday, October 15th.—I forget! My aunt had gone to buy fruit in front of the Saint Reparate Church, in the city of Nice.

The women immediately formed a circle around me; I sang in a low voice the *Rossigno che vola*. This filled them with enthusiasm, and the older ones began dancing. I repeated the few words I know in Nicene. In one word, it was a popular triumph. The apple-merchant, bowing to me, cried:

"*Che bella regina!*"

I do not know why common people love me, and I, myself, feel contented among them, I believe myself a queen, I speak to them with condescension, and I retire after a small ovation like that of to-day. Were I a queen, the people would adore me.

Monday, December 27th.—I have had such a queer dream. I was flying high above the earth, a lyre in my hand, the cords of which were constantly loosening, and I could not draw one sound from it. I kept on going higher, I could see immense horizons, clouds—blue, yellow, red, mixed, golden, silvery, torn, strange clouds—then all became gray, then new amazements. I continued going upward, until finally I reached such a great elevation that it was frightful, still I felt no fear; the clouds appeared to be frozen, grayish, and shining as lead. All became vague, I still held my lyre, with its loosened cords, in my hand, and far beneath my feet was a reddish ball—the earth.

Digitized by Google

All my life is in this journal, my calmest moments are when I write. They are, perhaps, my only calm moments.

If I die soon, I will burn all; but if I live to be old, my journal will be read. I believe there is not yet a photograph, if I may express myself thus, of the whole existence of a woman; of all her thoughts, of all, of all. It will be curious.

If I die young, soon, and if by mischance this journal is not burned, it will be said: "Poor child! she loved, and all her despair came from that."

Let it be said. I will not attempt to prove the contrary, for the more I say, the less will I be believed.

What is there more stupid, more cowardly, and more vile than mankind? Nothing! nothing! Mankind was created for the perdition of good; I was about to say for the perdition of mankind.

It is 3 o'clock in the morning, and, as my aunt says, I shall gain nothing by being up all night.

Ah, I am impatient! My time will come. I like to think so, but something tells me that it will never come, that I will pass my life in waiting. Always waiting and waiting—waiting!

I am angry and I do not weep; I do not throw myself on the ground. I am calm. It is a bad sign; it is better to be furious.

Tuesday, December 28th.—I am cold, my mouth burns. I know it is unworthy of a strong mind to abandon one's self to a vile sorrow, to gnaw one's fingers through aversion of a city like Nice; but to shake my head, smile with contempt, and think no more of it, would be too much. To weep and storm pleases me better.

I have become so nervous that each piece of music, which is not a galop, makes me weep. In each opera I find something of myself, and the most ordinary words touch my heart.

Such a state would do credit to a woman of thirty. But the idea of having nerves at the age of fifteen, and weeping like a fool at every stupid sentimental phrase!

Digitized by Google

A little while ago I again fell on my knees, sobbing and imploring God, with arms extended and eyes fixed before me, as if God were there in my room.

It seems that God does not hear me, although I cry loud enough. I believe I say impertinent things to the good God.

At this moment I am in such despair, so unhappy that I desire nothing. If all the disagreeable society of Nice knelt before me, I would not budge,

Why! why! I would give it a kick! For, after all, what does it all amount to?

Oh, God! will all my life be thus?

Monday there will be a shooting-match. I do not even care. And formerly?

I wish I possessed the talent of all the authors combined, that I might give a just idea of my profound despair, of my wounded self-love, of all my baffled desires. It is enough for me to wish for something, for nothing to come.

Could I ever find a dog in the street, famished and beaten by boys; a horse, who, from morning till night, drags an enormous load; a miller's donkey; a church rat; a professor of mathematics without pupils; a poor devil of any kind, so crushed, so miserable, so sad, so humiliated, so depressed, as to be compared to me.

What is terrible in me, is that past humiliation does not glance off my heart, but leaves its hideous traces.

You will never understand my situation. You will never realize what my existence really is. You will laugh, laugh, laugh! But, perhaps, some may be found who will weep. God have pity on me, listen to my voice. I swear that I believe in You.

A life like my life, with a character like my character!!!

I have not even the amusements of my age. I have not even what each American girl in short dresses has: I do not even dance!

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, December 29th.—My God, if You will make my life what I should like it to be, I promise You, my God, if You take pity on me, I promise to go from Kharkoff to Kieff on foot, like the pilgrims. If, moreover, You will satisfy my ambition and make me perfectly happy, I promise You to go to Jerusalem and walk one-tenth of the distance.

Is it not a sin to do as I do? Some saints have made vows; yes, but I seem to make conditions. No, God sees that my intention is good, and if I do wrong He will forgive me, for I wish to do right.

My God, pardon me and take pity upon me; allow me to accomplish my promises.

Holy Mary, it may be stupid, but it seems to me that, as a woman, you are more clement, more indulgent; take me under your protection and I swear to consecrate one-tenth of my income to all sorts of good works. If I do wrong, I do it unconsciously. Pardon!

Digitized by Google

1876.

Rome, Saturday, January 1st.—Oh, Nice, Nice, is there a prettier city in the world after Paris? Paris and Nice—Nice and Paris! France, nothing but France; in France only is there real life.

I must study, since I am in Rome for that purpose. Rome does not impress me as Rome.

Is it really Rome? Perhaps I am mistaken; is it possible to live in any city but Nice? To go through cities, to visit them; yes, but to remain! Bah! I will get used to it.

And all these people who remained at Nice, they seem to me to have remained in the position in which I have left them; not budging until my return. Alas! they budge without me, they amuse themselves without me, and care very little for the "creature in white."

Being out of sight, I would I were also out of reach of their tongues.

I hear they speak of me, I can hardly believe it.

I think but of the month of May, when I shall make my entry into Nice, when I shall go to the Promenade des Anglais in the morning without a hat and with my dogs.

I am here like a poor transplanted plant. I look from my window and, instead of the Mediterranean, I see dirty houses; looking out the other window, instead of the castle, I see the corridor of the hotel; in the place of the dial of the tower, I hear the clock of the hotel.

It is wicked to acquire habits and to detest change.

Wednesday, January 5th.—I have seen the *façade* of St. Peter's, it is superb, it delighted my heart, especially the left

Digitized by Google

colonnade, as it stands alone; and those columns, with the sky for a background, produce a most striking effect. We might believe ourselves in ancient Greece.

The bridge and fort of St. Angelo are also after my own ideas; it is grand, it is sublime!

And the Colosseum!

What can I say after Byron?

Monday, January 10th.—We went to see Mgr. de Falloux, who has not left his bed for twenty days. From there, to the Countess Antonelli's, but she had left Rome ten days ago. Finally, we went to the Vatican. I had never seen "the great" so closely, and did not know how to approach them; nevertheless, my instinct told me we were not doing as we should. We were to meet Cardinal Antonelli, the Pope in fact if not in name, the spring which moved the papal machinery and still sustains it now.

We arrived, with sublime confidence, under the right colonnade, dispersing, not without trouble, the crowd of guides who surrounded us. At the foot of the stairway, I addressed myself to the first soldier and asked for His Eminence. That soldier sent me to the chief who gave me another soldier very queerly dressed. We then ascended four enormous stairways of marble, in different colors, and finally came to a square court, which, because we were not expecting it, was very imposing. I did not think to find such a view in the interior of a palace of any kind, although I knew, from descriptions, what the Vatican was.

Seeing such immensity, I would not have the popes destroyed. They are already great in having achieved so much greatness, and worthy of being honored for having employed their lives, their power, and their gold in leaving to posterity this colossal structure called the Vatican.

In this court we found some common soldiers and one officer, and two guards dressed like Jacks in cards. I asked again for His Eminence. The officer politely inquired my

Digitized by Google

name. I wrote it. It was carried away and we waited. Waited and wondered at our absurd escapade.

The officer said the hour was ill-chosen, that the Cardinal was at table, and could probably receive no one. In fact, the man soon returned saying, His Eminence had just retired to his apartments feeling somewhat indisposed and could not receive us; but, if we would kindly leave our cards below and return "to-morrow morning," he would probably receive us.

And we left, laughing very much about our visit to Cardinal Antonelli.

Friday, January 14th.—At 11 o'clock came Katorbinsky, my young Polish professor of painting, bringing a model with him, with a face wonderfully like that of Christ, if the lines and shades were a little softened. This unfortunate being has but one leg; he poses for heads only. Katorbinsky tells me he always takes him for his pictures of Christ.

I must admit I was somewhat intimidated when told to copy from nature, like this, right away, without preparation. I took the charcoal and drew the outlines boldly. "Well done," exclaimed the master, "now do the same with the brush." I took the brush and did as he bade me. "Well done," he repeated, "now paint." So I painted, and in an hour-and-a-half, it was finished.

My unfortunate model had not moved; as for me, I could not believe my eyes. With Binsa, I required two or three lessons for the outline in pencil and a copy on canvas, while here all was done at once, and from nature—outline, color, background. I am pleased with myself, and if I say it, it is because I deserve it. I am severe and it is difficult to please me, especially where I, myself, am concerned.

Nothing is lost in this world. What, then, will become of my love? Each creature, each man, has an equal part of this fluid within him; only, according to his constitution, his character, and circumstances, he appears to have more or less.

Digitized by Google

Each man loves continually, but different objects, and when he seems to love no longer, the fluid turns to God or to nature, in words, in writings, or simply in sighs or in thoughts.

Now, there are creatures who drink, eat, laugh, and do nothing else. With them, this fluid is either absorbed by their animal instincts, or else scattered on all objects or all men in general without distinction, and it is these persons whom we call kind-hearted, and who, in general, do not know how to love.

There are also some creatures who are commonly supposed to love no one. That is not exactly true, however, they always love someone, but in a manner peculiar to themselves, different from others. But there are still other unfortunates who veritably do not love, because they have loved and love no longer. Another error! They love no longer we say; well, why then do they suffer? Because, they still love and think they do not, or because of unrequited love or the loss of a beloved one.

Within me, more than within others, the fluid asserts itself, and is continually visible; if I concealed it I should burst.

I shower it, like beneficient rain, on an unworthy red geranium, which does not even suspect it. It is one of my fancies. It pleases me, and I imagine many things. I have acquired the habit of thinking of him, and once accustomed, it is difficult to break myself of it.

I am sad! I fear to fear, for when I fear a calamity it is sure to come. I dare not pray to God, for I have but to pray to be certain my request will not be granted. I dare not remain without praying, for I would then say: "Ah, had I but prayed God!"

Decidedly, I must pray; at least, then I shall have nothing to reproach myself with.

Thursday, January 20th.—To-day Facciotti made me sing all my notes. I have a compass of three octaves, less two notes. He was astounded. As for me, I am so delighted I don't

Digitized by Google

know what to do. My voice, my treasure! My dream is to win a glorious place for myself on the stage. I consider that as fine a destiny as to become a princess.

We visited the studio of Monteverde, then that of the Marquis d'Epinay, to whom we had a letter. D'Epinay's statues are marvelous. He showed me all his studies, all his unfinished works. Madame M.— had represented Marie to him as an extraordinary and artistic being. We admired everything, and asked him to make a statue of me. It will cost 20,000 francs. It is dear, but it will be beautiful. I told him I was very much in love with myself. He measured my foot on that of a statue and found it smaller. D'Epinay exclaimed that I was Cinderella. The clothing and head-dresses of his statues are admirable. I burn with impatience to have my statue made.

God hear me! Preserve my voice; if I lose all else, let my voice remain. My God, continue to be good to me, don't let me die of disappointment or sorrow. I desire so much to go into the world! Time passes away and I do not advance. I am nailed to my place, I who wish to live, live running—by railway! I who burn, who boil, who am full of impatience!

"I have never seen such a fever of life," said Doria of me.

If you knew me, you would have an idea of my impatience, of my pain!

Pity! my God, pity! I have but You, it is to You that I pray, it is You Who can console me!

Saturday, January 22d.—Dina had her hair dressed by a hair-dresser, I also; but that frightful idiot arranged mine hideously. In ten minutes I changed it, and we left for the Vatican. I never saw anything to compare with the stairways and rooms that we went through. As to St. Peter's, I found nothing to criticise. A servant dressed completely in red damask led us into a long gallery exquisitely frescoed, and with cameos and medallions in bronze incased in the walls. To the right and left are chairs, which are hard enough, and

Digitized by Google

at the end the bust of Pius IX., under which is placed a beautiful chair in gold and red velvet. The time fixed was a quarter to 12, but it was 1 o'clock when the door opened, and, after several guards and officers in uniform, and in the midst of several cardinals, appeared the Holy Father, clothed in white, with a red mantle, and leaning on a cane with a head of ivory.

I knew him well from his portraits; but, in reality, he is much older, so old, in fact, that his lower lip droops like that of an old dog.

All the people knelt down. The Pope came to us first and asked who we were. A cardinal was reading the letters of introduction, and gave him the names.

"Russians? Then from St. Petersburg?"

"No, Holy Father," said mamma, "from Lower Russia."

"Are these young ladies yours?" he asked, again.

"Yes, Holy Father."

We were at the right, those at the left were kneeling.

"Rise! rise!" said the Holy Father.

Dina attempted to do so.

"No," said he, "it is only those on the left; you may remain."

He placed his hand upon her head in such a manner that she bent quite low, then he gave us his hand to kiss and passed on to others, addressing a few words to each one. When he passed on the left side it was our turn to rise. He then stopped in the center and once more we knelt. He made a short discourse in very bad French, comparing the requests for indulgences at the approach of the Jubilee, to repentance which comes at the moment of death, and saying that we must gain heaven, little by little, by doing something agreeable to God every day.

"We must gain our country little by little," said he. "But our country is not London, it is not St. Petersburg, it is not Paris, it is Heaven. We must not wait till the hour of death, we must think of it every day, and not do as one does at the

Digitized by Google

approach of the Jubilee. *Non è vero?*" continued he, in Italian, turning to one of his suite, "*anchè il cardinale*—the name escaped me—*lo sà.*"

The Cardinal thus apostrophized, laughed, as did all the others; it must have had a meaning to them. Then, the Holy Father retired, satisfied and smiling, after having given his benediction to the people, rosaries, images, etc. I had a rosary, and on my return home I put it away in my soap-box.

While this old man blessed and talked, I prayed God that the Pope's blessing might prove a true blessing to me, and that I might be delivered from my sorrows.

There were several cardinals who stared at me just as the loungers do at the door of the Opera at Nice.

Sunday, January 23d.—Ah, how lonely I am. If, at least, we were all together! How foolish to be thus separated! We ought always to be together. Vexations would seem less important. We would feel better. Never, never again shall we be parted. We would be a hundred times better together—grandpapa, aunt, everybody, and Walitsky.

Monday, February 7th.—As we alighted from the carriage, at the door of the hotel, I saw two young Romans watching us go in, and when we took our seats at the table, the two posted themselves so as to watch our windows.

Mamma, Dina, and the others laughed at it, but I, more prudent, fearing to excite myself for two rascals, perhaps, and not knowing whether they were the same men I had seen in front of the hotel, sent Leonie to a shop opposite with instructions to examine those persons and come back and describe them. "They are very respectable gentlemen," she reported. From that moment we did nothing but go to the windows, look through the blinds, and make jokes at the expense of those two wretches, exposed to the rain, wind, and snow.

It was 6 o'clock when we came in, and those two angels remained there until a quarter of 11, waiting for us. What legs they must have to stand that way for five hours!

Digitized by Google

Monday, February 14th.—As usual, the Italian came this evening. Mamma sent Fortune to buy some paper. The gentleman stopped him and spoke to him, as he had often done. Here is the story—though not so classical as Theramene's, it is not the less interesting, flavored as it is, with a Nicene accent, which is not without a charm of its own:

"I was going down to get some paper when the gentleman spoke to me. He said: 'Is this the place where those ladies live?' I said: 'Yes.' Then he said to me: 'If they will visit my villa, I will send for them in a coupé or a landau, whichever they please.' Then I told him you did not know him. Then he said you did know him. 'The mother of those young ladies knows me, we meet every evening at the villa Borghese, and on the Pincio.' Then I spoke to him till he gave me his card. Then I brought it to you and went down, when he spoke to me again. Then I told him the ladies had forbidden my speaking to him, so he said: 'I am going home to write a letter, in a half-hour you may come down and get it.' Then I told him I could not come down every minute. Then he said to me: 'Let the ladies hang a string to which I may tie my letter, then they can draw it up the balcony. Have those ladies any string?' Then I told him you did not know him. Then he said: 'Let the ladies say by whom I may be presented and I will go find that person' I did not reply; he then said it was for the young lady in black, with flowing hair, who was at the villa Borghese yesterday (it was Dina). He then told me that if you would visit his villa, he would have people there and show you through, and if you wish it, he would send his carriage."

You should have seen Fortune; his hands crossed behind his back, one foot forward, his mouth open to the ears, and with a very wicked expression in his eyes.

The whole affair is almost Spanish, a regular *Rosina-like* romance, and we laughed so much that Lola almost fainted away.

Digitized by Google

In the beginning I was angry; I thought that it was an impertinence, but when I saw how it pleased Dina and her mother, I forgot my anger and joined in the chorus of merry jests.

Dina kept blushing like a peony, and put on the most triumphant and provoking airs; she is disagreeable when she is like that.

The gentleman has a villa and doubtless a fortune. Heavens! If he should marry Dina! I would like it more than anything. We have just had some gowns sent from Worth, and hers is all covered with white flowers exactly like orange blossoms.

Tuesday, February 15th.—Rossi came to see us and he was immediately questioned as to who the gentleman was.

"He is Count A—, the Cardinal's nephew," was the response

Humph! I might have known that.

Count A— looks like G—, who is wonderfully handsome, as everybody knows.

He did not look at me so much this evening, so I had a chance to look at him more; and I did so to my entire satisfaction. He is charming; but I must say that I have no luck, for those that I look at never look at me. He glanced at me through his glasses, to be sure, but discreetly, as he did the first day. He was very affected, too, and when we rose to go, he snatched up his glass, and scrutinized us as long as we remained.

"I asked you who the gentleman was," said my mother to Rossi, "because he reminds me strongly of my son."

"He is a charming fellow," returned Rossi, "a little *passerello*, very gay and full of wit, and remarkably handsome."

I was delighted at hearing that. I have not had so much pleasure for a long time as I have had this evening. I was bored, and I did not care for anything, because I had no one to think of. But now all is changed, and I am full of excitement.

"He looks very much like my son," said my mother.

"He is a charming fellow," replied Rossi, "and, if you are willing, I shall be delighted to present him to you."

Digitized by Google

Friday, February 18th.—There was a grand masked ball at the Capitol to-night. Dina, her mother, and myself went there at 11 o'clock. I had no domino, but I wore a close-fitting gown of black silk with a long train and a tunic of black gauze and silver lace, draped before and puffed behind so as to make the most graceful monk's robe in the world, a mask of black velvet and lace, light gloves, and a rose and some lilies of the valley on my breast. It was entrancing, and our entrance produced an immense effect.

I was very timid, and I did not dare to speak to anyone, but all the men surrounded us, and I finally took the arm of one of them—a person I had never seen before. It was very amusing, but I think almost everyone recognized me. I should have been more careless in my dress, but—what difference does it make? Three Russians thought they recognized me, and followed behind us, speaking Russian very loud, in the hope that we would betray ourselves; but, instead of that, I wheeled about and spoke in Italian. They went away, saying that they were mistaken, and that I was an Italian.

Duke Cesaro came up.

"Whom are you looking for?"

"A—. Is he going to come?"

"Yes; meanwhile, stay with me—the most elegant woman in all the world."

"Oh, there he is! My dear fellow, I was looking for you."

"Bah!"

"Only, as it is the first time I have met you, look out for your accent; you lose considerably when seen close to. Look out for what you say."

I suppose this was witty, for Cesaro and two others began to laugh uproariously. I felt sure that they all recognized me.

"It is easy to know your figure," they said to me on all sides. "Why are you not in white?"

"Upon my word, I think that I am playing the part of

Digitized by Google

gooseberry," said Cesaro, seeing that we talked continually with A—.

"I think so, too." said I. "Go away."

And putting my hand through the arm of the young dandy, I walked through the room, without taking any more notice of the rest of the company than if they had been so many dogs.

A— has a very handsome face, a clear complexion, black eyes, a long, straight nose, well-shaped ears, a little mouth, very fair teeth, and the mustache of a young man of twenty-three. I treated him by turns as a flirt, a young fop, as unhappy, as dissipated, and he told me as seriously as possible how, at nineteen, he had emancipated himself from the paternal roof, how he had cast himself headlong into the pleasures of life, how *blasé* he is—that he has never loved, etc.

"How many times have you been in love?" he asked me.

"Twice."

"Oh, oh!"

"Perhaps even more."

"I would like to be the *more*."

"You audacious young man! Tell me why all these people have taken me for the lady in white?"

"Because you resemble her. That is why I am with you. I am madly in love with her."

"That is scarcely polite to me."

"What do you want? It is the truth."

"You keep looking at her. Heavens! How pleased she is, and how affected."

"No, never! She is never affected. That is the last thing that ought to be said of her."

"It is easy to see that you are in love."

"I am—with you. You resemble her."

"Fie! I have a much better figure."

"Well, never mind! Give me a flower."

I gave him a flower, and he gave me a branch of ivy in return. His accent and his languishing air made me weary.

Digitized by Google

"You have the air of a priest. Is it true that you are going to be ordained?"

He commenced to laugh.

"I detest priests; I have been a soldier."

"You! you have only been at the seminary."

"I hate the Jesuits; and for that reason I am continually quarreling with my family."

"My good friend, you are ambitious and you would like people to kiss your slipper."

"What an adorable little hand!" he cried, kissing it, an operation which he performed many times during the evening.

"Why did you make such a bad beginning with me?" I asked.

"Because I took you at first for a Roman, and I detest those women."

The fact is that when I was with Cesaro, he proposed to sit down, and A— placed himself on my left, and, while I was talking to my escort, tried to put his arm around my waist, in the most outrageous manner in the world.

"If you don't drive this little fool away," said I to Cesaro, "I am going myself."

And Cesaro drove the little fool away.

I have not seen much of men, only incidentally in the street, in the theatre, and at home. Heavens! How different they are in a masked ball! So imposing and so reserved in their carriages, and so bold, so vulgar, and so horrid here! Doria was the only one who did not lose his dignity. That is, perhaps, because he is above human frailties. Ten times I left my young entertainer and ten times he found me again.

Dominica told us to go, but the young man detained us. Finally, we found two arm-chairs and then the conversation changed.

We spoke of Saint Augustin and of the Abbé Prévost.

Finally we escaped without anyone thinking of following us, for all those who had ever seen me in the street had recognized me.

Digitized by Google

I was amused and disenchanted.

A— does not please me at all, and yet—

Ah, the miserable son of a priest stole my gloves and kissed my left hand!

"You know," he said, "I don't promise to always wear this glove upon my heart, that would be silly; but it will serve as a pleasant souvenir."

We left Fortune to avert suspicions, and returned all alone.

Monday, February 21st.—I have the honor to introduce you to an idiot. Judge of it yourself. I seek, I find, I invent a man, I live in him, I swear only by him, I mix him up in everything, and then, when he has completely taken possession of my fickle mind, I become bored and perhaps sad and tearful. I am far from desiring that this should happen, and I only say it from an instinctive feeling that it will.

When, oh, when, will the real Roman carnival come? Up to the present time I have seen only balconies adorned with strips of cloth—red, blue, yellow, and pink, and a few masks.

Wednesday, February 23d.—Our neighbors were there; the lady was charming and the equipages superb. Trolly and Giorgia were in a beautiful carriage with big horses, and their footmen in white knee-breeches. It was the prettiest turnout imaginable. They inundated us with flowers. Dina turned scarlet and her mother was radiant.

Finally, the cannon was fired, the horses commenced to run, and A— had not come; but the young man of yesterday came, and as our balconies were adjoining we commenced to talk.

He gave me a bouquet, I gave him a camellia, and he said everything tender and loving that a well-bred young man could say to a young lady to whom he had not had the honor of an introduction. He swore to keep the flower always and to dry it in his watch. And he promised me to come to Nice and show me the petals of the flower which, in his heart, would always remain fresh. It was very amusing.

Digitized by Google

Count B—(that is the name of the handsome stranger) did not bore me; but, as I lowered my eyes to the vulgar multitude below, I saw A—, who bowed to me. Dina threw him a bouquet, and ten villainous arms were stretched out to seize it. One man caught it, but A—, with the greatest coolness, seized him by the throat, and held him in his strong grasp until the wretch released his prey. It was such a splendid thing to do, and A— looked almost sublime. I was perfectly enthusiastic, and forgetting my blushes, and then blushing anew, I threw him a camellia. He caught it, put it in his pocket, and disappeared. Then, still excited, I turned to B—, who seized the opportunity to pay me compliments on the way in which I spoke Italian and all sorts of things.

The *barberi* passed like the wind in the midst of the hurrahs and blows of the populace, and upon our balcony we spoke only of the wonderful way in which A— had caught the bouquet. Indeed, he had the air of a lion, of a tiger. I had not expected such a thing from that delicate young man.

He is, as I remarked in the beginning, a strange mixture of languor and strength.

I can still see his clenched hands grasping that rascal's throat.

You will laugh, perhaps, at what I am going to say to you, but I shall say it all the same.

Well, by such an action, a man can make himself loved in an instant. His manner was so calm, as he choked that villain, that I fairly lost my breath.

In the house every time that they spoke of it, I blushed like a Nice rose.

Three-quarters of an hour afterward, at the very height of my flirtation with our neighbor, I saw, at the end of a long pole, all ornamented with gilt paper, an immense bouquet carried by a queer-looking fellow, who did not know to whom he must offer it, when a cane, supporting itself upon the balcony, made it lean toward me.

Digitized by Google

It was A—, who was in this way repaying me for my camellia. At first I did not understand, for I had not seen A—; but, after a second's hesitation, I with difficulty raised the magnificent bouquet, and took it into my arms, smiling as I did so at the awful son of a priest.

"Why, it is splendid!" cried the English lady.

"*E bello veramente*," said B—, a little out of humor.

"It is charming," said I, myself delighted to the bottom of my heart.

And, bearing my trophy, I went down to the carriage, and looked once more at the awful son of a priest.

After seeing that I had taken his bouquet, he bowed to me in his calm fashion, and disappeared, no one knows where.

All the evening I talked of nothing else. I even interrupted conversations to speak of what my mind was full of. "Is not A— adorable?" I said it in a jesting way, but I am afraid I really think it. At present, I am trying to persuade my friends that I am greatly taken with A—, and they will not believe me; but when I shall tell them the contrary of what I say at this moment, they will believe me, and they will be right.

I am again impatient. I would like to sleep to shorten the time to go upon the balcony.

Monday, February 28th.—When I went out upon the balcony overlooking the Corso, I found all our neighbors at their places, and the carnival proceeding with great gaiety. I looked down below, just opposite, and I saw the Cardinalino with a companion. As I perceived him, I became nervous, blushed, and remained standing; but the wicked son of a priest disappeared, and, after a while, I turned to mamma, whom I found holding out her hand to some one—to Pietro A—.

"Ah, this is indeed an honor! You have come to our balcony! How glad I am!"

He remained the time that courtesy demanded with my mother, and then he came to my side. As usual, I was on the extreme right of the balcony, adjoining that of the English

Digitized by Google

lady. B— was late, and his place was taken by an Englishman, whom the English lady introduced to me, and who was very attentive.

"But what do you do with yourself?" asked A—, with his calm, gentle manner. "You never go to the theatre."

"I have been ill; I have a sore finger."

"Where?" and he tried to take my hand. "Do you know that I went every evening to the Apollo, and each time remained only five minutes."

"Why?"

"Why?" he repeated, looking me full in the eyes.

"Yes, why?"

"Because I went to see you and you were not there."

He said many other things of this sort, made great play with his eyes, and amused me exceedingly.

"Give me a rose."

"What for?"

Agree with me that this was an embarrassing question; but I love to ask questions to which one must return a silly answer, or none at all.

"Look at that pipe-stem," I said, pointing to a frightfully ugly specimen of humanity in a long overcoat and a big hat. "If you could flatten him out, I would give you a rose."

Then there was a spectacle fit for the gods. A— and Plowden strove their best to cast old bouquets on the head of the man, who, becoming roused, in his turn began to pelt us.

I was protected by the Cardinalino and Plowden, and the bouquets, I ought rather to say brooms, fell all about me. They ended by breaking a pane of glass and a street lamp. It was very interesting.

B— offered me a big basket of flowers; he blushed and bit his lips; I don't know what was the matter with him. But let us leave that tiresome person and return to the eyes of Pietro A—.

He has adorable eyes, especially when he doesn't open them too wide. His lids, which cover fully a quarter of the pupil,

Digitized by Google

give to his eyes an expression which turns my head and makes my heart beat fast.

Sunday, March 5th.—At the Villa Borghese there was a great race; a man had engaged to run forty times round the Place de Lienne, in the grounds of the villa, in an hour and five minutes. A great gathering of people, at the head of which was the charming princess.

Zucchini was there (he made me laugh), Doria, and a crowd of others. It reminded me of the horse-races, and all the people wandering around upon the grass made a very pretty effect.

Suddenly, I perceived the Cardinalino, and I turned aside to speak to Delbeck, because I felt that I was blushing.

"Good-morning, Mademoiselle," said he, as he came up.

"Good-morning, Monsieur."

There are two persons who have a large part in my life, each independently of the other, Doria and A—.

Doria—majesty, ice, and terror.

A—, gaiety, coquetry, and charm.

Pietro A— decidedly pleases me.

I said that I had been eating violets, Cardinalino and Plowden asked me for some and I gave them my bouquet, which they devoured like two donkeys.

A— ended by eating the threads of silk which I pulled from the fringe on my dress.

A— is a charming boy; his whims delight me. For instance, he bought some cards, and asked me to play.

Plowden asked for leave to play also.

"But it can't be done," exclaimed the fiery son of a priest, opening his eyes wide.

"Yes, yes, yes," said I, "we can all three play; it is the same thing."

"The same thing!" he retorted, looking at me as if he had been pricked with a pin.

Digitized by Google

As I write, I can hear his voice in my ears; I am very much in love with him. I speak quite naturally as I feel. When he goes away I am angry. I never have enough of him. It is absurd to get so fond of people as I do.

"At least, to torment Pietro," said Dina, "be kind to B—."

Torment! I have no desire to do so. Torment him, excite his jealousy, fie! In love, that is as bad as to put paint upon one's face. It is vulgar, it is low. One can torment involuntarily, naturally, so to speak; but, to do it with a set purpose, fie! Besides, I could not do it with a set purpose, I have not enough determination. Is it possible to be agreeable to some monster or other, when the Cardinalino is by and one can speak to him?

The fellow in question pays determined court to mamma who calls him her dear child. I like to see him so nice to her. He complains of his parents, who do not wish him to keep horses because he spent too much when he joined the army at seventeen. He will be twenty-three in April.

A child in years and in character.

Monday, March 6th.—I remember that yesterday, during the race, I let fall my bouquet. A— leaped down, picked it up, and was obliged to scramble back on his knees.

"How will he get up here again?" exclaimed Dina.

"Oh, it is very easy," said I.

"All that I do is very easy," said the young fellow, brushing off his knees. "I expose myself to ridicule, and it is very easy." And he looked far away into the distance to show that he was offended.

(*May*, 1877. NOTE.—*Pray, once for all, do not accord too much importance to my admirations; I did not really think what I wrote of A—. I embellished him, to create a romance.*)

March.—At 3 o'clock we were at the Porta del Popolo. Delbeck, Plowden, and A— met us there. A— helped me to mount, and we started off.

Digitized by Google

My habit is of black cloth, made by Laferrière of a single piece, so that it has nothing of the English stiffness, nor of the usual scantiness; it is a princess robe, close fitting—everywhere.

"How well you look on horseback!" said A—.

Plowden annoyed me by wishing to keep with me all the time.

Pietro was uneasy about mamma, who was following us in a landau.

Once alone with the Cardinalino, the conversation turned naturally to love.

"Eternal love is the tomb of love," said he; "You must love for a day, and then change."

"A charming idea! Was it from your uncle, the Cardinal, that you learned that?"

"Yes," was the laughing answer.

Wretched son of a dog, and of a priest, I think that he has made me seriously angry by that truth spoken in his calm manner.

Once in the open country, we began to gallop, leaped ditches, and went like the wind. It was delightful! He mounts you on your horse in the most perfect manner.

Tuesday, March 7th.—Just because of all the follies I have talked, I have fallen in love with that scape-grace. I can't say that it is real love, however. He gave his portrait to mamma, and, as soon as he was gone, I took it away to my room, looked at it and found it charming, and I went to sleep thinking of it, and I see him again in my fancy, and I find so many things I would like to say to him.

Wednesday, March 8th.—I put on my habit, and at 4 o'clock I was at the Porta del Popolo, where the Cardinalino was waiting for me with two horses. Mamma and Dina followed in a carriage.

"Let us go this way," said my escort.

"Very well."

And we entered a sort of field—a pretty, green spot, called the Farnésina. He began his declaration again by saying:

"I am in despair!"

Digitized by Google

"What is despair?"

"It is when a man desires a thing, and can not get it."

"Do you desire the moon?"

"No, the sun."

"Where is it?" said I. "It has set, I think."

"No, it is there, shedding its rays upon me; it is you."

"Bah! Bah!"

"I have never loved, I detest women. I have only had intrigues with women of loose morals."

"And the moment you saw me, you loved me?"

"Yes, the very moment, the first evening at the theatre."

"You said that was all over."

"I was jesting."

"How can I tell when you are jesting, and when you are serious?"

"Why, it is easy to be seen."

"True; you can almost always tell when a person is speaking the truth; but you do not inspire me with any confidence, and your beautiful ideas upon love, still less."

"What are my ideas? I love you, and you do not believe me. Ah!" biting his lips and looking away, "then I am nothing, and I can do nothing."

"Pshaw! Don't be a hypocrite," said I, laughing.

"A hypocrite," cried he, turning in a fury, "always a hypocrite! Is that what you think of me?"

"And one thing more. Be still and listen. If, at this moment, one of your friends should pass, you would turn to him, and wink at him and laugh."

"I a hypocrite! Oh, it is so, is it? Very well, very well!"

"You are torturing your horse; let us descend the hill."

"You do not believe that I love you?" he said, again seeking my eyes and bending over me with an expression of sincerity, which made my heart beat.

"But—no," said I, feebly. "Hold in your horse, and let us descend."

Digitized by Google

His tender speeches were again mingled with precepts of horsemanship.

"Is one not to be allowed to admire you?" he said, stopping a few steps below me, and looking at me. "You are beautiful," he continued, "only I think that you have no heart."

"On the contrary, I have an excellent heart, I assure you."

"You have an excellent heart, and you will not love?"

"That depends."

"You are a spoiled child, isn't it so?"

"Why shouldn't I be spoiled? I am not ignorant, I am good, only I am apt to lose my temper."

We were still descending; but, step by step, for the hill was very steep, and the horses, to keep their footing, took advantage of all the little inequalities of ground, and the patches of herbage.

"And I have a bad temper, too, it is wretched, and I can become furiously angry. Shall we leap that ditch?"

"No."

And I rode over a little bridge, while he leaped the ditch.

"Let us trot up to the carriage," said he, for we had reached the foot of the hill.

I started up my horse, but a few paces from the carriage he commenced to gallop. I turned to the right; A— followed me; my horse was galloping rapidly. I tried to rein him in, but he dashed madly onward. The plain was a large one; I tugged at the reins, but my efforts were vain; my hat fell to the ground, my hair streamed down my back, I was losing my strength, and I was afraid. I could hear A— behind me, I felt what they must be suffering in the carriage. I longed to throw myself off; but the horse was going like an arrow.

"It is horrible to be killed like this," I thought. "I have no longer any strength; some one must save me."

"Stop him!" cried A—, who could not catch up with me.

"I can not," I answered in a low voice.

My arms were trembling; an instant more and I should have

Digitized by Google

lost consciousness, when A— came quite close, struck my horse over the head, and I seized his arm, partly to support myself and partly to touch him.

I looked at him and he was pale as death; never have I seen a countenance express so much emotion.

"God!" he ejaculated, "what anxiety you have caused me!"

"Oh, yes, without you I should have fallen; I could no longer hold him. Now, it is all over. Well, it is a pretty thing to happen," I added, trying to laugh. "Let some one give me my hat."

Dina had alighted, when we reached the landau. Mamma was beside herself with anxiety, but she said nothing to me; she knew there was something underneath it all, and did not wish to annoy me.

"We will go slowly home."

"Yes, yes."

"But how you frightened me! And you, yourself, were you afraid?"

"No, I assure you, no."

"Oh, yes, I can see it."

"It is nothing, nothing at all."

And in another moment we were declining the verb "to love" in all its moods and tenses. He told me everything from the first evening he saw me at the opera, when he recognized Rossi leaving our box, and he left his own to join him.

"Do you know," he said, "that I have never loved anyone? My only affection was for my mother; as to the rest—I never looked at anyone in the theatre, and I never went to the Pincio. All that is silly, I laughed at all society, and now I go there myself."

"For me?"

"For you. I am compelled to—"

"Compelled?"

"Yes, by a moral force. Doubtless, I could produce an effect upon your imagination, if I should make to you a

Digitized by Google

declaration like a hero in a novel; but it is silly, I think only of you, I live only in you. Man is a material creature; he meets a multitude of people, and a multitude of thoughts occupy him; he eats, talks, reflects—but I think of you."

"At the club, perhaps?"

"Yes, at the club. When night comes, I remain there to dream, smoke, and think of you. Then—especially when it is dark and I am alone—I think, dream, and reach such an illusion that I believe you are present before me. Never," he continued, "have I felt what I feel now. I think of you; I go out in the hope of meeting you. The proof is that since you no longer go to the opera, I no longer go there. Especially when I am alone, do I give myself up to dreams. I imagine that you are with me. I assure you that I have never felt what I feel now, and so I conclude that it is love. I desire to see you, and I go to the Pincio; I desire to see you, I am furious if I am disappointed; and then I dream of you. It is like this that I have begun to feel the pleasure of love."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-three. I began life at seventeen, I might have been in love a hundred times, but I never have. I have never been like those youths of eighteen who live upon a flower, a picture; all that is silly. If you knew, sometimes, how much I think, how much I find to say to you, and—and—"

"And you can not?"

"No, it is not that; I have fallen in love and become silly."

"Don't think that; you are not silly at all."

"You don't love me," he said, turning toward me.

"I know you so little that really it is impossible to tell," I answered.

"But, when you know me better," he said, gently, looking at me in the most timid manner possible; (then he lowered his voice) "you will love me a little, perhaps?"

"Perhaps," I replied, as gently as he.

It was almost dark, and we had reached the Porta del

Digitized by Google

Popolo. I entered the carriage. He went to say good-bye to mamma, who gave him some commands regarding the horses, for the next time, and we were ready to start.

"I hope to see you soon again," said A— to mamma.

I held out my hand to him in silence, and he pressed it—not as before.

"I know all about it," cried Dina, after we had started. "He said something to her, she repulsed him, he startled her horse and there was an accident."

"Really, my dear, he said a great many things to me."

"But am I not right?" demanded Dina.

"Entirely, my dear," I answered, demurely.

On our return home, I went to my room, disrobed, put on a wrapper, and stretched myself on the sofa, weary, charmed, bewildered. I could not understand anything at first; for two hours I forgot everything, and it took me two hours to recollect what you have read. I should be filled with joy if I believed him, but I doubt, despite his true, agreeable, even ingenuous air. That is what comes from being oneself *canaille*.

Ten times have I left my desk to lie down upon the bed, to review all in my poor head, to dream, and to smile.

See, good people, how bewildered I am, and he is doubtless at the club.

I feel quite another being, quite silly; I am calm, but still astounded by what he has said to me.

I remember now, he told me that he was ambitious.

"Every well-born man ought to be so," I answered him.

I love the way in which he speaks to me. No rhetoric, no affectation; one can see that he is thinking aloud. He says to me such sweet things, for example, this:

"You are always pretty," he said, "I don't know how you manage it."

"My hair is all down, now."

"So much the better; you are still prettier so, with your hair down; you are still more—you are— (He stopped and

Digitized by Google

smiled.) You are still more—I don't know how to say it—more exciting."

I think now of the moment when he said to me, "I love you," and when I answered for the hundredth time, "That is not true." He started in the saddle, and bending down and letting the reins fall: "You do not believe me!" he exclaimed, seeking my eyes, which I kept lowered. (Not through coquetry, I give you my word.) Oh, at that moment he was speaking the truth! I raised my head and met his anxious look, his black eyes, like chestnuts, and wide open as though striving to read my inmost thoughts. They were uneasy, irritated, provoked by the evasion of mine. I could not help it, for if I had looked him full in the face I should have burst out crying. I was unnerved, confused, I did not know what to do, and he thought, perhaps, that I was playing the coquette. Yes, in that moment, at least, I know that he did not lie.

"You love me now," I answered, "in a week you will love me no longer."

"Oh, have mercy! I am not one of those men who pass their lives murmuring sweet nothings in maidens' ears. I have never paid court to anyone and I love no one. There is one woman who tried with all her strength to make me love her. She made five or six appointments with me and I never kept one of them, because I could not love her; you know that well."

Bah! bah! I shall never finish if I give myself up to these memories and continue to write. So many things were said.

Come, come, it is time for sleep.

Tuesday, March 14th.—I thought that I had promised Pietro to ride with him. We met him in a morning coat and a low hat; the poor fellow was in a cab.

"Why don't you ask your father for some horses?" I said to him.

"I have; but if you knew how hard the A—s are!"

Digitized by Google

I was vexed to see him in a miserable cab. To-day we leave the Hôtel de Londres; we have a fine, large apartment on the first floor of a house in the Via Babuino—reception room, small *salon*, large *salon*, four sleeping rooms, a studio, and the servants' chambers.

March 16th.—About 10 o'clock Pietro came. The *salon* is very large and very handsome; we have two pianos. I commenced to play softly one of Mendelssohn's songs without words, and A— commenced to chant to me his own particular song. The more seriousness and warmth he put into his plea, the more I laughed and the colder I became.

It is impossible for me to imagine A— as really serious.

Whatever the one you love may say, appears delightful. I am amusing sometimes to those who feel only indifference toward me, and for much stronger reasons, to those who feel more. In the midst of a sentence full of love and tenderness, I would say something irresistibly droll to him and he would commence to laugh. Then I would reproach him for this laughter, saying that I could not believe a boy who was never serious, and who laughed foolishly at everything. And this was repeated several times, so that he became thoroughly exasperated.

And he commenced to tell again how it began, since the first evening of the performance of *La Vestale*—

"I love you so much," he said, "that there is nothing I would not do for you. Tell me to shoot myself, and I would do it."

"And what would your mother say?"

"My mother would weep and my brothers would say: 'Instead of being three, we are now two.'"

"It would be of no use; I don't want any such proof."

"But then, what do you want? Tell me! Do you want me to jump out of this window into the court below?"

And he rushed toward the window. I held him back and he would not let go my hand.

Digitized by Google

"No," said he, with a gulp, as if forcing back a tear, "I am calm now; but—Heavens! there was a moment—don't provoke me so; answer me, say something."

"All this sort of talk is folly."

"Yes, the folly of youth, perhaps; but I do not believe that I have ever felt what I feel to-day, now, here. I thought I was going mad."

"In a month I shall go away and all will be forgotten."

"I will follow you everywhere."

"You will not be allowed."

"Who will prevent me, then?" he cried, darting toward me.

"You are too young," I said, changing the music, and from Mendelssohn passing to a nocturne, sweeter and stronger.

"Let us be married; we have a magnificent future before us."

"Yes, if I were willing."

"Oh! But of course you are willing!"

Then he went on, becoming more and more excited; I took no notice and did not even change color.

"Well," said I, "let us suppose that I will marry you; in two years you will have ceased to love me."

I thought that he would stifle.

"No! Why do you have such ideas?" And breathless, with tears in his eyes, he fell at my knees.

I recoiled, red with anger. Oh, piano, my protector!

"You must have a good temper," he said.

"I think so, indeed, for if I did not have, I should have already dismissed you," I answered, turning aside to laugh.

Then I rose, calm and satisfied, and went to make myself agreeable to the others.

But he was obliged to go.

"Is it time?" he asked, with a questioning look.

"Yes," said mamma.

After I had given a very brief account of the scene to mamma and Dina, I shut myself up in my chamber, and, before

Digitized by Google

writing, I remained an hour, with my hands over my face and my fingers buried in my hair, trying to analyze my own sentiments.

I think that I understand myself.

Poor Pietro! It isn't that I care nothing for him—on the contrary; but I can not consent to be his wife.

The wealth, the villas, the museums of the Ruspolis, the Dorias, the Torlonias, the Borgheses, the Chiara would overwhelm me. Above all things, I am ambitious and vain. And to think that one loves such a creature, because one does not know her! If one could know her, that creature—Ah! Bah! one would love her just the same.

Ambition is a noble passion.

Why under the sun is it A— instead of another?

And I go on repeating the same phrase, changing the name.

Saturday, March 18th.—I have not had an instant alone with A—, and it annoys me. I love to hear him tell me that he loves me. Since he has told me all, I spend much of my time, with my head in my hands, thinking, thinking! Perhaps I am in love. It is when I am tired out, and half asleep that I think that I love Pietro. Why am I vain? Why am I ambitious? Why am I sensible? I am incapable of sacrificing for an instant's pleasure whole years of magnificence and satisfied vanity.

"Yes," say the writers of romance, "but that instant's pleasure is enough to brighten, with its beams, a whole lifetime." Oh, no, I do not believe it! Now I am cold and I love; to-morrow I shall be warm and I shall not love. See, how the changes in temperature affect the destinies of men.

When he went away, A— said: "Good-evening," and took my hand and held it in his, asking me a dozen questions to defer our parting.

I immediately told all this to mamma; I tell her everything.

March 20th.—I behaved horribly this evening.

Digitized by Google

I talked in a low tone to the scape-grace, and gave everybody reason to believe things which will never come to pass. With other people about, he does not amuse me; when we are alone, he speaks to me of love and marriage. The son of a priest is jealous—furiously jealous; and of whom? Of everybody.

I listen to his rhapsodies, laughing with cold indifference, and at the same time let him take my hand. I also take his hand, in a manner almost maternal, and if he has not entirely lost his wits through his *passion* for me, as he says, he must see, that, while driving him away with my words, I detain him with my eyes.

I tell him that I shall never love him, but I do love him, or at least, I act as if I did. I say all sorts of silly things to him. Another man (an older man) would be contented; but he tears a napkin, breaks two pencils, or rips a curtain!

All these actions permit me to take him by the hand and to tell him that he is an idiot.

Then he looks at me with fixed fury, and his black eyes are plunged in my gray ones. I say to him, perfectly gravely: "Make up a face for me," and he laughs and I pretend to be vexed.

"Then you don't love me?"

"No."

"I ought not to have hoped it."

"Good heavens! yes; one must always hope; hope is a part of man's nature, but—as far as I am concerned, why—I will not give it to you."

And as I spoke laughingly, he went away passably satisfied.

Friday, March 24th.—Saturday, March 25th.—A— arrived a quarter of an hour earlier than usual; pale, interesting, sad, and calm.

When Fortune announced him, I armed myself from head to foot with that cold courtesy, calculated to enrage a man in his position.

Digitized by Google

I let him spend ten minutes alone with mamma before going in. Poor thing! he is jealous of Plowden! What an ugly thing it is to be in love!

"I had made up my mind never to come to your house again."

"Why have you come, then?"

"I thought that it would be rude to your mother who has been so kind to me."

"Oh, if that is the reason, you can go away and not come back again. Good-bye!"

"No, no, no! It was to see you."

"Ah! that is quite another thing."

"Mademoiselle," he said, "I have made a great mistake, and I know it."

"How so?"

"I have made you understand—I have told you that—"

"That?"

"That I love you," he exclaimed, contracting his lips, as if to prevent himself from crying.

"Pshaw! That is no mistake."

"Yes, it is a great, a tremendous mistake, for you play with me as if I were a doll, or a ball."

"What an idea!"

"Oh, I know that that is your nature! You love fun. Well, have all the fun you like with me. It is my fault."

"Let us have our fun together."

"Then, tell me, it was not to dismiss me, that you told me to go away from the theatre?"

"No!"

"It was not to get rid of me?"

"Monsieur, I do not need to make use of a stratagem, when I wish to get rid of anyone. I do it quite openly, as I did in B—'s case."

"Ah! and you told me there was no truth in that affair."

"Let us talk of something else."

Digitized by Google

He leaned his cheek against my hand.

"Do you love me?" he asked.

"No, Monsieur, not the least little bit in the world."

He did not believe a word of it.

At this moment, mamma and Dina came into the room, and after a few minutes, he went away.

Monday, March 27th.—In the evening we had company, and among others, A—.

Again we found ourselves at the piano.

"I know," he said, "who will be successful with you. A man who possesses great patience, and who loves you much less. But, don't you love me?"

"No!" I said, as I had twenty times before. And our faces were so close that I am surprised the sparks did not fly.

"You see!" he exclaimed. "What is to be done, when the love is all on one side? You are as cold as ice, and I—I love you."

"You love me? No, Monsieur, but you may some day."

"When?"

"Oh, in six months or so."

"In six months? I love you, I tell you; I am mad with love, and you mock me."

"You are very wise, Monsieur, really. Now, listen; even if I loved you, there would be too many difficulties in my path. I am too young, and then, there is religion."

"Oh, I know all that. There will be difficulties for me, too; you think not? You can not understand me, because you don't love me. But, if I should propose to you to elope?"

"Horror!"

"Wait! I do not propose it to you. It is a horror, I know, when one is not in love. It would not be a horror, if you loved me."

"Monsieur, I beg of you, don't speak of such a thing."

"Mademoiselle, I am not speaking of it to you; but I should do so, if you loved me."

Digitized by Google

"I do not love you."

I do not love him, and yet I let him say all these things to me. How absurd it all is!

I think that he has spoken to his father, and that his communication has not been kindly received. I can not decide. I am entirely ignorant of the condition of affairs, and I would not consent to go and live with his family. It is hard enough to live with my own. What would it be among strangers? Am I not wonderfully sensible for a girl of my age?

"I will follow you," he said, the other evening.

"Come to Nice," I said to him to-day.

He answered nothing, but kept his head down, which proved to me that he had spoken to his father.

I do not understand it at all. I love him, and I do not love him.

Wednesday, March 29th.—I have said that A— was not yet ready to relinquish everything for me.

"I love you," he said. "I will do anything for you."

"The Pope will curse you; the Cardinal will curse you; and your father will curse you."

"I trouble myself very little about all those people, when you are in question. I snap my finger at the whole world. If you loved me, as I love you, you would say what I say. If you had a passion for me, as I have for you, you would not speak as you do, and you would see in the whole world only the one you loved."

Ah! Pietro is no longer a silly boy. He is improving more and more, and I commence to have a certain respect for him.

Thursday, March 30th.—To-day, alone, shut up in my chamber, with the door locked, I have given myself up to deep reflection over this grave matter.

For several days my position has been a false one—and why?

Because Pietro has asked me to be his wife; because I have not squarely refused him; because he has spoken to his

Digitized by Google

parents; because his parents are not easy to manage; and because Visconti has had the following conversation with mamma:

"I would like to know, Madame, to whom it is your intention to marry your daughter?" commenced Visconti, after having spoken favorably of Pietro's fortune and person.

"I have no fixed idea," said mamma, "and then my daughter is so young."

"Ah, Madame, we must discuss things openly. Would you marry her to a foreigner, or to a Russian, one of her own countrymen?"

"I should prefer a foreigner, because she would be more happy with him, since she has been brought up outside of her own country."

"Well, I would like, also, to know if all your family would consent to her marriage with a Catholic, and that the offspring of the union should be brought up in the Catholic faith?"

"Our family would gladly consent to anything that would be conducive to my daughter's happiness."

"And what would be the relations of your family with that of the bridegroom?"

"Excellent, I think, inasmuch as the two families would see each other rarely or not at all."

"Pietro A— is a charming young man and he will be very rich, but the Pope is an important factor in all the affairs of the A—s, and the Pope will make difficulties."

"But, Monsieur, why have you said all this? There is no question of marriage. I love that young man as one of my children, but not as a future son-in-law."

That is the conversation as nearly as mamma could remember it.

It would be a very sensible thing to go away, especially as nothing will be lost by putting the matter off till next winter.

We must go to-morrow. I will prepare myself—I mean, to see the marvelous places which are as yet unknown to me.

Digitized by Google

Yes, but what frets me the most is that the opposition does not come from our side, but from the A—s. It is horrid, and my pride rebels at it.

We will leave Rome.

It is not very agreeable, really, to have objections made to me by his family when I myself don't want anything to do with them. Rome is such a gossiping city that everybody is talking, and I am the last to perceive it. That is always the case.

I have doubtless worked myself up into a fury at the idea that they want to take Pietro away from me, but I see a finer future before me and I aspire to a loftier station, thank heaven! If A— satisfied me in every way I should not be angry; but a man whom I have rejected in my mind as being unworthy of me, and they dare to say that *the Pope will not allow* it!

I am furious—but wait a moment!

The evening came, and with the evening, Pietro A—.

We received him coldly enough because of the Baron Visconti's words and also of a multitude of suppositions, for since Visconti's visit, we have done nothing but conjecture.

"To-morrow," said Pietro, soon after his arrival, "I am going away."

"Where?"

"To Terracina. I shall remain there eight days, I think."

"They are sending him away," murmured mamma, in Russian.

I had said the same thing to myself. How shameful! I could have cried with rage.

"Yes, it is disagreeable," I answered, in the same language.

Oh, dog of a priest! You understood thoroughly how humiliating all this is!

Conversation languished. Mamma was so offended and so angry that her headache increased and she went to her room. Dina had already retired. There was a tacit agreement to

Digitized by Google

leave me alone with him in order that I might find out the truth.

Once alone, although trembling a little inwardly, I advanced bravely to the attack.

"Why are you going away? Where are you going?"

Ah! if you fancy that he answered me as squarely as I asked the question, you are greatly mistaken.

I questioned and he eluded answering.

"What is your motto, Mademoiselle?" he asked.

"Nothing before me, nothing after me, nothing beyond myself!"

"Well, that is mine, too."

"So much the worse!"

Then began protestations too real to be agreeable. Words of love, without beginning and without end, bursts of anger, reproaches. I sustained the storm with equal dignity and calmness.

"I love you to distraction," he went on; "but I have no confidence in you. You have always jeered at me, always laughed, always been cold with your magisterial questions. What would you have me say to you when I see that you will never love me?"

I listened, stiff and motionless, not even allowing him to touch my hand. I was determined at all costs to know everything; my anxiety and suspicions made me too miserable.

"How, Monsieur, do you expect me to love a man whom I do not know; who hides everything from me? Speak, and I will believe you; speak, and I promise to give you an answer. Understand, after you have spoken, I promise to give you an answer."

"But you will laugh at me, Mademoiselle, if I tell you. You see it is such a secret that if I tell you it will be a complete revelation of myself. There are certain things so personal that one tells them to no one in the world."

"Speak; I am waiting."

Digitized by Google

"I will tell you, but you will laugh at me."

"No, I promise you not to."

After many promises not to laugh, and not to repeat it to anyone, he told me at last.

It seems that last year, when he was a soldier at Vienna, he incurred debts to the amount of 34,000 francs, that is, in three months' time. He quarreled with his father, who refused to pay them. But a few days ago, he pretended that he was going away, saying that he was badly treated at home. Then his mother came to him and told him that his father would pay his debts on condition that he would lead a sensible life. "And, in the first place, and before being reconciled with your parents, you must become reconciled to God." He has not been to confession for a long time. In short, he is going to retire for eight days to the monastery of San Giovanni and Paolo, Monte Coelia, near the Coliseum.

It was hard enough for me to keep serious, I assure you; to us, this seems so odd, but it is quite natural for the Catholics of Rome.

That is the secret, then.

I leaned against the mantle, and turned away my eyes, which, heaven knows why, were full of tears. He stood near me, and for some seconds we neither spoke nor looked at one another. We remained standing an hour to talk—of what? Of love, of course. I know all that I wanted to know, I have drawn everything from him.

He has not spoken to his father, but he has told all to his mother.

"Moreover," he said, "you can be sure, Mademoiselle, that my parents have nothing against you; religion is the only obstacle."

"I am confident that they can have nothing against me, for, if I should consent to marry you, it is you who would be honored, not I."

I took care to show myself reserved and prudish, as I am,

Digitized by Google

and to utter moral principles of an astounding purity, so that he could relate it all to his mother, since he tells her everything.

He has never spoken to me as he did this evening. "I love you, I adore you, I am mad with love," he murmured, very rapidly. "Do you love me a little? Tell me!"

"If I do love you, what good can come of it?"

"It will make us happy."

"I am not the only one to decide the matter. You know, Monsieur, there are fathers and mothers."

"Mine, Mademoiselle, are not opposed, I can assure you of that. Let us be engaged."

"Not so quickly, Monsieur. What did you say to your mother? How did you speak to her?"

"I said to her, 'It has been a strong desire of yours that I should marry. Now, I have found some one whom I love, and I wish to marry and settle down.' And my mother answered that I must think it over carefully before taking so serious a step, and all sorts of things."

"That is quite natural. And have you spoken to your father?"

"No."

"I ask you this, because we are being gossiped about in the city, and some one has spoken to mamma on the subject, and it made her very angry."

"My mother has doubtless mentioned it."

It is after 2 o'clock, and I should never finish writing if I should try to set down even half of all that was said, and then, it is a shame, but one can write only the *harsh* things; as for the *sweet* things, they can not be written, and they are the only things amusing to read.

Sunday, at 2 o'clock, I am to be in front of the monastery, and he will show himself at the window, and press a white handkerchief to his lips.

As soon as he was gone, I ran to calm mamma's wounded pride, and I told her all; but in a laughing way, so as not to appear in love.

Digitized by Google

For the present, this is enough! My mind is at rest, and I am happy, especially happy before the members of my own family, who have already begun to look melancholy.

It is late, and I must really go to sleep.

Friday, March 31st.—It was a famous proof of love, to tell me what he did, and I did not laugh. He begged me to give him my picture to carry with him to the monastery.

"Never, Monsieur; it would be such a temptation. Nevertheless, I shall think of you all the time." Those eight days in a monastery are ridiculous enough. What would his friends of the Caccia Club say if they knew about it?

I will never tell any one. Mamma and Dina do not count, for they will be as silent as I. Pietro in a monastery—it is a side-splitting thought.

Suppose he invented it all? Such a character is frightful! I have no confidence in any one. Poor Pietro, in a monk's frock, shut up in a cell, four sermons a day, mass, vespers, matins! I can not grow accustomed to so strange a thing.

Oh, God! do not punish a vain creature; I swear to you, that I am honorable at heart, and incapable of a low or mean action. I am ambitious, that is my misfortune.

The beauties and ruins of Rome turn my head; I long to be Cæsar, Augustus, Marcus Aurelius, Nero, Caracalla the devil, the Pope!

I long to be everything, and I am nothing.

But I am always the same; you can be convinced of that by reading this journal. The details and the shading change, but the chief lines are always the same.

It is a pretty thing to be shut up in a monastery!

How he must be bored, poor fellow! I was wrong to tell my family about it. I am unworthy of his confidence; but I could not do otherwise, with mamma so furious.

"What!" she said, "they make a pretense of having refused us, when we had no desire for them at all? They dare to think that it would be so great a happiness for us! It is insulting!"

Digitized by Google

Mamma was right, and—well, I had to calm her and raise myself in her eyes.

Indulgentia plenaria pro vivis et defunctis. Amen.

April 3d.—It is spring, and they say that all women grow beautiful at this season of the year. That is true, if I may judge from myself. The skin becomes more delicate, the eyes brighter, and the color fresher.

It is the third of April, and I have still fifteen days of Rome.

How strange it is! as long as I wore a fur hat, we had winter; yesterday, I put on a straw one, and instantly it was spring. A gown or a hat often produces this effect; how often a word or a gesture will bring about something which has been a long time preparing, and for the springing into life of which, this little shock was necessary.

Wednesday, April 5th.—I write and speak of all those who pay me any attention. All this is nonsensical, and it is caused by my idleness.

I paint and I read, but it is not enough.

A vain girl like me should devote herself to painting, for it is an imperishable art.

I shall never be a poet, nor a philosopher, nor a *savant.* I can be only a singer and a painter. That, in itself, is a good deal. And then, I want to be in everyone's mouth, and that is the principal thing.

Stern moralists, don't shrug your shoulders or criticise me with an affected indifference. To tell the truth, you are the same at heart. You take very good care not to let it be seen, but that does not prevent you from knowing in your inmost souls that what I say is true.

Vanity! Vanity! Vanity!

The beginning and the end of all things and the eternal and sole cause of all things.

What is not the effect of vanity is the effect of the passions. The passions and vanity are the only masters of the world.

Digitized by Google

Thursday, April 6th.—I come to my journal to implore it to comfort my empty, sad, unlucky, envious, unhappy heart.

Yes, and I, with all my tendencies, with all my strong desires, and the fever of my blood, am always and everywhere checked like a horse is checked by the bit. He foams, rages, and rears, but he is checked.

Friday, April 7th.—I am worried to death. Oh, how expressive is the Russian saying: "To have a cat in the heart." I have a cat in my heart. It gives me constant and incredible pain to think that a man I care for can not love me.

Pietro has not come; he left the monastery only this evening. I have seen his clerical and hypocritical brother, Paul A—. There is a being who ought to be crushed—little, black, sallow, vile, hypocritical Jesuit!

If the monastery story be true, he must know of it, and how he must laugh in his little, mean way, when he tells it to his friends. Pietro and Paul can not endure one another.

Sunday, April 9th.—With fervent faith, a heart filled with emotion, and a soul at peace with all men, I went to confession and partook of the Holy Communion. So also did mamma and Dina, and then we heard mass. I listened to every word and I prayed.

Is it not maddening to be under subjection to an unknown and incontestable power? I mean the power which has taken away Pietro. What can not the Cardinal do, when the people of his church are in question? The power of the priests is enormous, and it is impossible to penetrate their mysterious machinations.

We are filled with astonishment, fear, and admiration. It is only necessary to read the history of the various nations to see their hand in all events. They are so far-sighted that ordinary eyes can not discern what they are gazing at.

Since the beginning of the world, in all countries, the supreme power has either openly or covertly belonged to them.

Digitized by Google

No, really, it would be too much, if, with one fell blow, they should take Pietro away forever! He can not fail to return to Rome, he has declared so strongly that he would do so.

Isn't he doing anything to bring about his return? Isn't he breaking everything? Isn't he screaming out in his despair?

My God! I have been to confession, I have received absolution, and I am in a tearing, swearing rage.

A certain amount of sin is as necessary to a man's life as is a certain amount of air.

Why do men remain bound to the earth? Why does the weight of their conscience drag them down? If their conscience were pure, they would be too light and they would fly away toward the skies like red balloons.

That is a strange theory. But no matter!

And Pietro does not come.

But then I don't love him! I want to be sensible and tranquil, and I can not.

The benediction and the portrait of the Pope has brought me ill-luck.

They say that he brings ill-luck.

There is a strange hissing in my breast, my finger-nails are red, and I cough.

There is nothing more frightful than not to be able to pray. Prayer is the only consolation of those who can not act. I pray, but I do not believe. It is abominable. But it is not my fault.

Monday, April 10th.—They have shut him up forever—No, they have shut him up for the time that I am to be in Rome.

To-morrow, I go to Naples; they can not have foreseen this move. Besides, once released, he will come after me. It is not this that I am uneasy about, but the present uncertainty, this unsuspected, unforeseen blow.

Digitized by Google

I walk about my chamber, groaning low, like a wounded wolf.

I have still the branch of ivy he gave me at the Capitol. How sad it all is!

I don't really know what is the matter with me, which is ridiculous, no doubt, but true.

Besides, it is folly to rage, to pray, and to weep; and isn't it always so under all and every circumstance? I ought to become accustomed to it and no longer fatigue heaven with my useless lamentations.

I don't know what to think him—a worthless fellow, a coward, or a child whom they tyrannize over.

I am exceedingly calm, but sad. It is only necessary to look at things from a certain point of view, says mamma, to discover that there is nothing in the world worth the trouble. On the whole, I agree with my lady mother; but, to do so perfectly, I must know the exact truth. All that I know is that this is a queer state of affairs.

Wednesday, April 12th.—All night long I saw him in my dreams; he assured me that he had really been in the monastery.

They are packing up, and we go away this evening to Naples. I hate going away.

When shall I have the happiness of living in a home always in the same city; to see always the same set of people, and from time to time to take journeys for recreation?

Rome is the place where I would like to live, love, and die.

No, stop, I would like to live where I would be well, to love everywhere, and to die nowhere.

Yet, I must say that I like the Italian, or rather, Roman life well enough; there is a certain aroma of ancient magnificence still hanging about it. People are too apt to have a false idea of Italy and the Italians. They are pictured as poor, selfish, bigoted, and thoroughly broken down. It is quite the con-

Digitized by Google

trary. Rarely, in other countries, can be found families as rich and houses maintained with so much luxury. I speak, of course, of the aristocracy.

Rome under the Pope was a city apart, and in its way sovereign of the world. Then, each Roman prince was like a little king; he had his court and his clients as in antiquity. It is from this *régime* that the greatness of the Roman families sprang. Certainly, in two more generations, they will have neither greatness nor wealth, for Rome is subject to the royal laws, and Rome will become like Naples, Milan, and the other cities of Italy.

The great fortunes will be divided, the museums and galleries acquired by the government, and the princes of Rome transformed into a crowd of nobodies, covered with a great name as with an old theatrical mantle, to hide their misery. And when these great names, once so respected, shall be dragged in the mud, when the king shall think that he alone is great, having trampled under his feet all the nobility, he will suddenly, in a flash, perceive what a country is where there is nothing between the people and their king.

Take France as an example.

On the other hand, take England, where the people are free and happy. There is so much poverty in England, you will say. But, in general, the English people are the happiest. I am not speaking of their commercial prosperity, but only of their domestic life.

Let any one who desires a republic in his country begin by trying it in his own household.

But enough of dissertations on subjects of which I have only a feeble idea, and an entirely personal opinion.

What will Pietro say when he returns to Rome and does not find me there? What a rumpus he will make! So much the worse for him. It isn't my fault.

Naples, Thursday, April 13th.—"See Naples and die!" I desire neither the one nor the other.

Digitized by Google

It is 7 o'clock, and the weather is as fine as it is at Nice. I can see from my window magnificent turnouts, of which Rome possesses very few. Besides, Naples is renowned for the splendor of its horses and carriages.

Did he go away of his *own accord*, or was he forced to do so? *That is the question.*

I am writing in front of a large mirror, and I look like Beatrice di Cenci in my white robe and flowing hair. My hair is arranged in the Pompeian style, as Pietro used to say.

Heavens! how I wish I had one of Dumas' novels! It would prevent me from writing follies, and above all, from reading them afterward.

Shut up by myself, I have wept many tears. It is just the same as it was at Rome. Heavens! how I hate changes! how miserable I am in a new city!

He received his orders and he obeyed, and to obey he must have loved me very little.

He did not obey when his military service was in question. Fie! Enough! Enough!

Poverty! Pshaw! Vileness! I can no longer keep thinking of such a man. *If I lament, it is over my unhappy fate, over my poor life scarcely begun, and during which I have met only with deceit.*

Certainly, like all human beings, perhaps even more than others, I have sinned; but on the other hand, there is some good in me, and it is unjust to humiliate me in everything.

I took my position in the middle of the room, joined my hands, and raised my eyes; but something said to me, prayer is of no avail. I shall receive what is in store for me—not one sorrow the less, nor one suffering the more, as Mgr. de Falloux says.

There is only one thing to be done—to become resigned. I know it is difficult, but otherwise, where would the merit be?

I believe, idiot that I am, that the transports of an ardent faith and fervent prayers can effect something.

Digitized by Google

God desires a German-like resignation, and I am incapable of it.

Does He think that those who are thus resigned have to conquer themselves?

Oh, no! They are resigned because they have water in their veins instead of blood, because it is less trouble.

Is it any merit to be calm when that calm is natural? If I could be resigned, I should obtain everything, for it would be sublime. But I can not. It is no longer a difficulty, it is an impossibility. During moments of *brutishness*, I shall be resigned. I shall not be so of my own will, but just *because I am.*

Oh, God, have pity upon me! Give me peace! Give me a soul to attach myself to. I am weary, very weary. No, no, it is not the storms that I am weary of, but the deceit!

April 13th.—To air my room, which was full of smoke, I have opened the window. For the first time for three long months, I have seen a clear sky, and the sea, through the trees, sparkling in the moonlight. I am so delighted that I am going to write. Heavens! how beautiful it is after the dark and narrow streets of Rome! A night so calm, so beautiful! Ah, if he were here!

Do you take that for love?

One can not sleep when it is so lovely!

Coward, weak and unworthy! unworthy of the least of my thoughts!

Easter Sunday, April 16th.—I don't like Naples. At Rome the houses are dark and dirty, but they are palaces in point of architecture and antiquity. At Naples, everything is equally dirty, and you see only pasteboard houses in the French style.

There, all the Frenchmen will be furious, but they can quiet down. I admire them and love them more than any other nation, but I must acknowledge that their palaces will never attain the massive, splendid, and graceful majesty of the Italian palaces, especially those of Rome and Florence.

Digitized by Google

Tuesday, April 18th.—At noon we started for Pompeii. We went in a carriage, for the road is excellent, and there are Vesuvius and the towns of Castellamare and Sorrento to be admired.

The guides at the excavations are excellent. It is a curious thing to wander about the streets of this dead city.

We had taken a chair with bearers, and mamma and I took turns in resting.

The skeletons are frightful; the poor things are in shocking attitudes. I looked at the remains of the houses and the frescos, and tried to re-establish the whole place in my imagination, and to re-people the houses and streets.

What a terrible force must it have been that engulfed a whole city!

I heard mamma speaking of marriage:

"Woman is made to suffer," she said, "even with the best of husbands."

"Woman before marriage," said I, "is Pompeii before the eruption; and woman after marriage is Pompeii after the eruption."

Perhaps I was right!

I am very tired, nervous, and sad. We shall not return until 8 o'clock.

Wednesday, April 19th.—See the disadvantage of my position. Pietro, without me, has his club, society, his friends, everything in a word, excepting me; while I, without Pietro, have nothing.

I am only for him a distraction. He was for me, everything. He made me forget my ambition to play a great part in the world, and I thought only of him, was occupied only with him, too happy to escape my thoughts.

Whatever may happen to me, I bequeath my journal to the public.

All the books that we read are inventions, where the situations are forced and the characters false, while this is a correct

Digitized by Google

photograph of a whole life. Ah, you will say that the photograph is a bore, while the inventions are amusing! If you do say that, you will give me a very poor idea of your intelligence.

I offer you here what has never been seen before. All memoirs, all journals, all letters that are published are only highly-colored inventions destined to deceive the world.

I have no interest in practicing deception. I have no political action to veil, no criminal connection to conceal. No one is uneasy if I love or if I do not love, if I laugh or if I cry. My greatest care is to express myself as exactly as possible. I have no illusions in regard to my style or my orthography. I write faultless letters; but in the midst of this ocean of words, I doubtless let much escape my attention. I make, besides, mistakes in my language. I am a foreigner. But if you should ask me to express myself in my own tongue, I should perhaps do worse still.

But it was not to say all this that I opened my desk. It was to say that it is not yet noon; that I am a prey, more than ever, to my tormenting thoughts; that there is an oppression in my breast, and that I could willingly scream. Besides, that is my natural state.

The sky is gray, the Chiaja is traversed only by cabs and dirty pedestrians, and the stupid trees planted on each side shut out all view of the sea. At Nice, on the Promenade des Anglais, there are villas on one side and on the other the sea, which breaks without restraint upon the pebbles. Here, there are houses on one side, and on the other a sort of garden, which is continued along the street which separates it from the sea, from which it is itself separated by a rather large space of barren ground covered with stones and various buildings, and offering a sad spectacle of desolation.

When you reach the square, which terminates the Chiaja and which is planted with pretty shrubs, you feel much better, and this place is really pretty. Further on, you enter upon the

Digitized by Google

quay; to the left, houses; to the right, the sea, but the sea, bounded by a wall with a balustrade and adorned with oyster-sellers and shells; then come the gates of the port, the different buildings of the navigation companies, and the port itself; but it is no longer the sea, only a dirty place crowded with a mass of ugly things.

Cloudy weather always makes me a little sad; but here, to-day, it absolutely oppresses me.

Within, the death-like silence of our apartment; outside, the nerve-racking noise of the cabs and the wagons with their little bells, the gray skies, the wind rattling the blinds! Ah, I am very miserable, and I should be taken not to the skies, nor the sea, but to the earth.

[illegible], *April 21st.*—When I entered the *salon* this morning, I was suffocated by the odor of flowers. The room was literally full of them. There were flowers from Doenhoff, from Altamura, and from Torlonia. Doenhoff sent a table formed of flowers, which replaced the usual table; but it was not of this that I wanted to speak.

Listen: Since the soul exists; since it is the soul which animates the body; since it is that vaporous substance which alone feels, loves, hates, desires; since, finally, it is the soul which gives us life, how does it happen, then, that any wound in this vile body, or any internal disorder, the abuse of wine or of food—how does it happen, then, that such things can put the soul to flight?

I can make a wheel go round, and stop it when I choose. That stupid wheel can not stop my hand. In the same way, the soul, which sets in motion the various portions of our body, ought not to be driven away, it, the essence of reason, by a hole in the head, or an indigestion caused by eating lobster. It ought not to be, but it is. Whence the conclusion must be drawn that the soul is a pure invention. And this conclusion causes the fall, one after the other, like the scenes in a theatre fire, of all our deepest and dearest beliefs.

Digitized by Google

Rome, Monday, April 24th.—I had a whole day's occurrences to relate, but now I can not remember a thing. I know only that we met A— upon the Corso, that he ran up to the carriage, beaming and joyful, and that he asked if we would be at home in the evening. We would be, alas!

He came, and I went to the *salon*, and began to talk quite as naturally as the others. He told me that he had been four days in the monastery, and that then he had gone into the country. He is now reconciled to all his relations, he is going to go into society, be sensible, and think of his future. Finally, he told me that I had amused myself at Naples, flirted as usual, and that that proved that I did not love him. He also told me that he had seen me the other Sunday near the Monastery of San Giovanni and Paolo. And to prove that he was speaking the truth, he told me how I was dressed and all that I did, and I must acknowledge that his statements were correct.

"Do you love me?" he asked me at last.

"And you?"

"Ah, that is always the way with you, you always mock and laugh at me!"

"Suppose I were to say yes!"

He is entirely changed; one would say that, in twenty days, he has become a man of thirty. His whole conversation is different and he has become so sensible that it is marvelous. He seems to have changed places with a Jesuit.

"Do you know, I play the hypocrite now, I bow before my father, I always agree with him, I am wise, and I think of my future."

To-morrow, perhaps, I shall be able to tell something; but to-night, I am too stupid.

Tuesday, April 25th.—"I will come to-morrow," he said, as if to pacify me, "and we will talk of all this seriously."

"It is useless, Monsieur, I know now how much faith to put in your wonderful love. You need not come again," I added,

Digitized by Google

more faintly. "You have vexed me. I bid you good-bye in anger and I shall not sleep to-night. And you can boast of having put me in a rage—go!"

"But, Mademoiselle, how odd you are! I will talk to you to-morrow, when you are calmer."

It is he who complains, he who says that I have always refused him, always laughed at him, that I have never loved him. I should have said the same in his place; but, nevertheless, I find him very dignified and self-possessed for a man who is really in love.

Now, I am paid in my own coin, so I am never going to say another word on the subject.

Let him commence it, if he likes.

It seems to me that he no longer loves me.

Good! There is a thought which rouses me, which makes my blood boil and cold shivers run down my back.

I like this much better. Oh, yes, at least I am furious, furious, furious!

It rained all the time, and a servant announced Baron Visconti, who, in spite of his years, is so witty and charming. Suddenly, while discussing the Odescalchi marriage, they spoke of Pietro.

"Ah, Madame, the boy, as you call him, is not a match to be disdained, for the poor Cardinal is failing rapidly, which, one of these days, will make his nephews millionaires, and consequently Pietro will be a millionaire."

"Do you know, Baron, that they tell me the boy is going to enter a monastery?"

"Oh, no, he is thinking of quite another thing, I assure you."

Then they spoke of Rome, and I said how fond I was of it, and how I disliked to leave it.

"Well, remain then."

"I would like to."

"I like to see that your heart loves our city."

Digitized by Google

"Oh, speaking of hearts, have you seen mine? Look!" and I showed him a silver heart, a nun's ornament.

"Do you know," I added, "that they are going to leave me in Rome, in a convent?"

"Oh," said Visconti, "I hope you will remain here in another way than that, we shall find a means. *I* will find a means," with a warm pressure of my hand.

Mamma was radiant, I was radiant, it was quite an aurora borealis.

In the evening, contrary to all expectation, we had numerous callers, among others, A—.

The company sat at one table, and I with Pietro at another. And we discussed love in general, and Pietro's love in particular. His principles are deplorable; or, rather, he is so crazy that he has no principles at all. He spoke so lightly of his love for me, that I did not know what to think. And then, his character is so much like my own, that it is extraordinary.

I don't know what was said, but at the end of five minutes we were no longer quarreling; all was explained, and we had agreed to marry. At least, he had. I kept silence for the most part.

"Are you going away Thursday?"

"Yes, and you will forget me."

"Ah, no, indeed! I shall go to Nice."

"When?"

"As soon as I can. At present, it is impossible."

"Why? Tell me; tell me at once!"

"My father would not permit me."

"But you have only to tell him the truth."

"Certainly, I shall tell him that I am going there on your account; that I love you, and that I wish to marry you, but I can not tell him now. You don't know my father; I have been forgiven, but I don't dare to ask anything yet."

"Tell him to-morrow."

"I shouldn't dare. I have not yet gained his confidence.

Digitized by Google

Remember that he has not spoken to me for three years. In a month, I shall be in Nice."

"In a month, *I* shall not be there."

"Where are you going?"

"To Russia. So, I shall go away, and you will forget me."

"But in fifteen days I shall be at Nice, and then—and then we will go away together. I love you, I love you!" he repeated, falling on his knees.

"Are you happy?" I asked, taking his head in my hands.

"Oh, yes, because I believe in you, I believe in your word."

"Come to Nice now," I said.

"Ah, if I could!"

"Where there's a will, there's a way."

Thursday, April 27th.—Oh, my God, You Who have been so good up to now, deliver me from this, I implore You.

And God has delivered me.

At the railway station, I walked up and down the platform with the Cardinalino.

"I love you!" he cried, "and I shall always love you, to my misfortune, perhaps."

"And you can see me go away with utter indifference?"

"Oh, don't say that! You must not speak so; you don't know what I have suffered. Besides, I knew where you were, and what you were doing. Since I have seen you, I am completely changed, be sure of that; but you have always treated me as something to be despised. I have committed follies in my life, and so has every one, but that is no reason for treating me like a brainless rascal. For your sake, I have broken with the past; for you, I have endured everything; for you, I have made this peace with my family."

"Not for me, Monsieur; I don't see what I have to do with this peace."

"Why, it was done, because I really cared for you."

"What?"

"You always want a detailed and mathematical explanation.

Digitized by Google

Certain things ought to be seen at a glance. You have made a fool of me."

"That is not true."

"Do you love me?"

"Yes, and listen to this: I am not in the habit of repeating things twice. I want to be believed at once. I have never said to any man what I say to you. I am very much offended, for my words, instead of being received as a favor, are received in a very careless and criticising spirit. And you dare to doubt what I say? Really, Monsieur, you go too far!"

He was confused, and tried to excuse himself. We talked very little after this.

"Will you write to me?" he asked.

"No, Monsieur, I can not, but I will allow you to write."

"Ah! ah! that is fine love!" he exclaimed.

"Monsieur," I said, gravely, "don't ask too much. It is a very great favor, when a young girl permits a man to write to her. If you don't know that fact, I will teach it to you. But we must enter the train, so don't let us lose time in vain discussion. You will write to me?"

"Yes; and, in spite of all you say, I feel that I love you as I shall never love again. Do you love me?"

I assented with a motion of the head.

"You will love me always?"

I answered as before.

"*Au revoir*, Monsieur."

"Until when?"

"Till next year."

"No!"

"Then, *adieu*, Monsieur."

And without giving him my hand, I entered the carriage, where the rest of the party already were.

"You have not shaken hands with me," said A—, approaching the window.

I held out my hand.

Digitized by Google

"I love you!" he said, very pale.

"*Au revoir!*" said I, gently.

"Think sometimes of me," he said, paling still more; "as for me, I shall do nothing but think of you."

"Yes, Monsieur; *au revoir.*"

The train began to move, and for some moments I could see him gazing upon me with a look full of emotion; then he took a step or two toward the door, but, as I was still visible, he stopped again like an automaton, pulled his hat down over his eyes, took another step forward—and then, then we were too far to see any more.

I should have been broken-hearted to leave Rome, to which I am so accustomed, if the sight of the moon, at about 4 o'clock, had not given me an idea.

"Do you see that crescent?" I asked Dina.

"Yes," she answered.

"Well, that crescent will be a very beautiful moon in eleven or twelve days."

"Doubtless."

"Have you seen the Coliseum by moonlight?"

"Yes."

"I have not."

"I know it."

"But you don't know, perhaps, that I want to see it."

"It is quite possible."

"Yes, and this means, that in ten or twelve days I shall be back in Rome, as much for the races as for the Coliseum."

"Oh!"

"Yes, I shall go with my aunt. And it will be very pleasant with my aunt, without you and mamma. We will drive about, and I shall enjoy myself very much."

"Well," said mamma, "it shall be so. I promise you." And she kissed me on both cheeks.

Friday, April 28th.—I went to sleep and I had frightful nightmare dreams.

Digitized by Google

At 11 o'clock, I lay down in order to escape the sight of the olive trees and the red soil, and at 1 we arrived at the Nice station, to the great delight of my aunt, who was awaiting us, together with Mademoiselle Colignon, Sapogenikoff, etc.

"Do you know," I called to them, before the doors were opened, "I am very sorry to come back here, but I could not do otherwise?"

And then I kissed them all around.

The house is charmingly furnished; my room is exquisite, all upholstered in light-blue satin. When I opened the door of the balcony and looked out on our very pretty garden, the Promenade, and the sea, I could not help saying aloud:

"It can not be denied but that there is nothing so splendidly simple and so adorably poetic as Nice."

Thursday, May 4th.—The real season for Nice is the month of May. It is beautiful enough to turn one's head. I wandered out into the garden in the light of the still young moon, and listened to the chirp of the crickets and the murmur of the waves breaking softly on the sands.

Naples is enormously praised; as for me, I am sorry, but I prefer Nice. Here the sea freely bathes the shore, while in the other place, it is hemmed in by a stupid wall with a balustrade, and even that wretched shore is obstructed by shops, boats, and filth.

"Think sometimes of me. As for me, I shall do nothing but think of you!"

Pardon him, God, he did not know what he was saying! I permit him to write to me and he has not availed himself of the permission. Will he even send the promised dispatch to mamma?

Friday, May 5th.—What was I saying? Oh, yes, that there was no excuse for Pietro's treatment of me. I can not understand indecision, I who am not in love.

I have read in novels that a man's love itself often makes him appear forgetful and indifferent.

Digitized by Google

I wish I could believe the novels.

I am sleepy and tired, and, in this state, I want to see Pietro and hear him speak of love. I would like to imagine that he is here. I would like to lose myself in a pleasant dream. The reality is dangerous.

I am bored, and when I am bored, I become very tender-hearted. Oh, when will this life of weariness, deceit, envy, and vexation end?

When shall I at last live the life I long for? When married to a great name, a great fortune, and a man who is sympathetic, for I am not so mercenary as you think. Moreover, if I am not so, it is through egotism.

It would be frightful to live with a man that you detested, and neither wealth nor position would be any consolation. Ah! God! Holy Virgin! Protect me!

May 6th.—Do you know? I have an idea—I would be perfectly delighted to see Pietro.

This evening I gave a party, such an one as has not been seen for years in the Rue de France. You know that there exists at Nice a custom of *turning the May*, that is, they hang up a wreath and a lantern, and dance underneath singing. Since Nice has been French, this custom has fallen more and more into disuse, and you see scarcely more than three or four lanterns in the whole town.

Well, I gave them a *rossigno;* I called it that after the *Rossigno che vola*, the prettiest and most popular song of Nice.

I had prepared beforehand and hung in the middle of the street a large structure of leaves, flowers, and Venetian lanterns.

Triphon (grandpapa's servant) was charged with arranging fireworks on the garden wall, and was ordered to light up the scene from time to time with Bengal fire. Triphon was not overjoyed. All these splendors were accompanied by a harp, a flute, and a violin, and washed down with wine in abundance. Some good women came to invite us to their terraces, for Olga

Digitized by Google

and I were looking at the scene alone, perched upon a wooden ladder.

The others went to a neighbor's terrace, and Olga, Marie, Dina, and I went into the middle of the street, calling the dancers, and trying with success to give spirit to the scene.

I sang and danced with all the rest, to the delight of the good people of Nice, especially the people of the neighborhood, who all knew me and spoke very kindly of "Mademoiselle Marie."

As I could not do anything else, I tried to make myself popular and that pleased mamma. She did not care for the expense. What pleased the crowd especially was, that I sang, and said a few words in *patois*.

While I was on the ladder with Olga, who was hanging on to my skirts, I was seized with a desire to make a speech; but I prudently refrained, for this year at least.

I watched the dances and listened to the cries, in the dreamy state I often fall into. And when the fireworks ended with a magnificent "sunburst," we all went home, amidst murmurs of gratification.

Sunday, May 7th.—One finds a despairing sort of satisfaction in despising, with reason, the whole world. At least one has no illusions. If Pietro has forgotten me, he has offered me a deadly insult, and there is one name the more to add to the list of those to whom I vow hatred and vengeance.

Such as it is, the human race pleases me; I like it, and I form a part of it, and I live with all these people, and on them depend my fortune and my happiness.

All this is stupid. But in this world, all that is not sad is stupid, and all that is not stupid is sad.

To-morrow at 3 o'clock, I go to Rome, partly to distract myself, and partly to show A— my contempt, if I can find the opportunity.

Thursday, May 11th.—As I said Tuesday evening, I set forth yesterday at 2 o'clock with my aunt.

Digitized by Google

It is a terrible proof of love that I seem to be giving Pietro.

Well, so much the worse! If he thinks that I love him, if he thinks such an enormity as that, he is only a fool!

At 2 o'clock we reached Rome, I jumped into a cab, my aunt followed me, the agent of the Hôtel de la Ville took our papers, and—and—I am in Rome! Heavens! what a happiness!

Our luggage will not arrive until to-morrow. To go and see the return from the races, we were obliged to be contented with our traveling dresses. However, I looked very well in my gray costume and my fur hat. I took my aunt to the Corso. (How delightful it is to see the Corso once more after Nice!)

I deafened her with my chattering and explanations, for it seemed to me that she saw nothing.

There was a sensation as I passed the Caccia Club. The *monk* was open-mouthed with astonishment, then he took off his hat and smiled to the ears.

We went to the Villa Borghese, where there was an agricultural fair.

We went through the exhibition on foot, admired the flowers and the plants, and met Zucchini. There were many people there.

Everyone was very much surprised to see me appear for the third time. I am very well known in Rome.

Simonetti came up to us, and I presented him to Madame Romanoff, and told him that it was by a marvelous chance that I was in Rome.

I made a sign to Pietro to come to me. He was beaming, and looked at me with eyes which showed very clearly that he took everything seriously.

He made us laugh very much, telling us of his sojourn in the monastery. He had consented, he said, to go there for four days, and, once there, they kept him for seventeen.

"Why did you fib about it and say that you had been at Terracina?"

"Because I was ashamed to tell the truth."

Digitized by Google

"Do your friends at the club know it?"

"Yes. At first I said that I had been at Terracina, then they alluded to the monastery, and I ended by telling everything, and then I laughed, and everybody laughed. Torlonia was furious."

"Why?"

"Because I had not told him all about it at first; because I had no confidence in him."

Then he told how, to please his father, he had pretended to accidentally let fall from his pocket a rosary, to have it believed that he always carried it. I loaded him with jests and impertinent remarks, which I must confess he bore with a very good grace.

Saturday, May 13th.—I disguise neither my sentiments nor my thoughts, and I have not the strength to bear anything with dignity, for I have been crying. Even while I write I can hear the patter of my tears falling upon the paper, big tears, which flow with no difficulty and no contortion of my face. I laid down upon my back to keep them in my head, but it was no use.

Instead of telling what makes me cry, I tell how I cry. And how can I say why? I, myself, don't know anything. "What!" I said to myself, with my head thrown back upon the sofa, "What! is it really thus? Has he then forgotten?" Doubtless, since he carried on an indifferent conversation mingled with words spoken so low that I could not hear them, and, finally, he repeated that he loved me only when near me, that I was ice, that he would go to America, that when he saw me he loved me, while when away he forgot me.

I, in the driest possible manner, begged him to speak no more to me on that subject.

Ah! I can not write, and you see, yourself, how I must suffer and how I have been insulted.

I can not write! And yet something commands me to do so. Until I have related everything, something torments me.

Digitized by Google

I chatted, and made tea as well as I could until half-past 10. Then Pietro came. Simonetti went away soon, and we were left a company of three. They spoke of my journal, that is to say, of certain questions I discuss in it, and A— begged me to read him something in regard to the soul and God. Then I went into the antechamber and knelt down before the famous white box to find what he wanted, while Pietro held the candle. But then, while seeking, I came across passages which had a common interest for us. I read them, and this lasted nearly half an hour.

Then, when we returned to the *salon*, he began to relate all sorts of anecdotes about his life since he was eighteen.

I listened to everything he said with a mingled feeling of terror and jealousy.

In the first place, his absolute lack of independence chilled me; if he should be forbidden to love me, he would obey, I am certain.

His family, the priests, and the monks terrify me. In spite of what he has told me of their goodness, I am seized with alarm in hearing of their enormous tyranny. Yes, they terrify me, and his two brothers also; but it matters very little after all; I am still at liberty to accept or refuse him.

I thank heaven that I am able to use my pen; yesterday it was torture to write. I can not tell why.

All that I have heard this evening, all the conclusions I draw from it, and all the things that have happened before, lie heavy in my brain. And then, there was the regret of seeing him go away this evening; it is so long till to-morrow! I felt a great desire to cry at the uncertainty of it, and perhaps with love, too.

Then, leaning my chin in my left hand, and the left elbow supported by my right hand, with frowning brow and disdainful lip I commenced to reflect on everything, on what I wanted and especially on what I did not have.

Then I began to write, and feeling an irresistible desire to dream, I stopped an instant, and then went on again!

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, May 17th.—I had a great deal to say yesterday, but it is overpowered by what I have to say to-night.

He spoke to me again of his love; I assured him that it was useless, for my relatives would never consent.

"They would be right," he said, dreamily. "I am not fit to make any one happy. I told my mother so, I spoke of you and I said: 'She is so religious and good, and I believe in nothing, and am only a wretch.' Think, I remained seventeen days in the monastery; I prayed, I meditated, and I do not believe in God; religion has no existence for me; I believe in nothing."

I looked at him with big, frightened eyes. "You must believe," I said, taking his hand; "you must reform and be good."

"It is impossible, and such as I am no one can love me, can they?"

"Um-m-m."

"I am very unhappy. You can never form any idea of my position. Apparently, I am on good terms with my family, but it is only in appearance. I detest them all, my father, my brothers, even my mother; I am unhappy. And if any one should ask me why, I wouldn't know what to say. Oh, the priests!" he cried, shaking his fist, grinding his teeth, and raising to heaven a face hideous with hatred. "The priests! if you knew what they are!"

It was five minutes before he became calm.

"I love you, however, and you alone. When I am with you, I am happy."

"Prove it!"

"How?"

"Come to Nice."

"You drive me mad when you say that. You know very well that I can not."

"Why not?"

"Because my father does not want me to go to Nice, and he won't give me any money."

Digitized by Google

"I understand that, but if you told him why you wish to go?"

"He would not consent even then. I have spoken to my mother and she does not believe me. They are so accustomed to my bad conduct that they have no confidence in me any more."

"You must turn over a new leaf. You must come to Nice."

"But what for, if I shall be refused, as you say?"

"I did not say refused by me."

"That would be too much," he said, drawing close to me, "that would be a dream."

"But it would be a beautiful dream, would it not?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Then you will ask your father?"

"Certainly; but he does not wish me to marry. No, I say that for these things the confessors must speak to him."

"Well, make them speak."

"Good heavens! do you say that?"

"Yes; you understand that it is not you I care for, but I wish a consolation for my wounded pride."

"I am a wretch, and accursed in this world."

It is useless, impossible to follow the hundreds of sentences spoken. I will simply say that he repeated a hundred times that he loved me, in a voice so gentle and with eyes so supplicating that, of my own free will, I came close to him and we spoke like good friends of a multitude of things. I assured him that there was a God in heaven, and happiness upon earth. I wished him to believe in God; to see Him through my eyes, and to pray to Him through my voice.

"Then," said I, at last, drawing away, "it is finished. Farewell."

"I love you."

"And I believe you," I said, pressing both his hands, "and I pity you!"

"Will you never love me?"

Digitized by Google

"When you are free."

"When I am dead."

"I can not now, for I pity you and look down on you. If they should tell you not to love me, you would obey."

"Perhaps."

"It is frightful!"

"I love you," he said, for the hundredth time, and he turned away in tears. I approached the table where my aunt was and said to her, in Russian, that the monk had paid me compliments which I would tell her to-morrow.

He came back again and I said farewell to him.

"No, not farewell."

"Yes, yes, yes! Farewell, Monsieur; I have loved you up to this conversation." (1881.—*I never loved him, it was all the effect of a romantic imagination in search of romance.*)

"Ah, so much the worse! I have said it, I loved you, but I was wrong, and I know it."

"But"—he began.

"Farewell."

"You no longer intend to go to Tivoli on horseback to-morrow, then?"

"No."

"And it is not fatigue that makes you give it up?"

"No! Fatigue is only a pretext, I no longer wish to go."

"No! It is not possible!" he said, holding my hands.

"*Au revoir.*"

"You told me to speak to my father, and to come to Nice?" said A—, upon the staircase, before going.

"Yes."

"I will do so, and I will come, cost what it may, I swear to you."

And he went away.

For the last three days I have had a new idea, and that is that I am going to die. I cough and I complain. The day before yesterday I was seated in the *salon* at 2 o'clock in the

Digitized by Google

morning, and my aunt prayed me to go to sleep; but I did not move, saying that I was going to die.

"Ah!" said my aunt, "if you go on as you have been, I have no doubt but that you will die."

"And so much the better for you. You will have less expense and you won't have to pay so much to Laferrière." And, with a paroxysm of coughing, I threw myself back on the sofa, to the great alarm of my aunt, who ran away to make me believe that she was angry.

Friday, May 19th.—My aunt went to the Vatican, and I, not being able to be with Pietro, preferred to remain alone. He would come about 5 o'clock, and I wanted so much to have my aunt still absent. I wanted him to find me alone, as if by accident, of course, for I can not show him any more that I seek him.

I sang and it gave me a pain in the chest.

I posing as a martyr! It is too silly.

My hair was arranged like that of the Capitoline Venus, and I was in white, like Beatrice, with a string of beads and a pearl cross around my neck.

Whatever anyone may say, there is in man a certain need of idolatry, of material sensations. God, in His simple grandeur, does not suffice. We need images to look at, and crosses to kiss.

Yesterday evening, I counted the beads of my rosary. There are sixty, and I prostrated myself sixty times, each time striking my forehead against the floor. I was all out of breath, but it seemed to me that I had performed an action agreeable to God. It was doubtless absurd, but the intention was good.

Does God take the intention into account?

Ah! but I have the New Testament. I will read it.

Not being able to find the Holy Book, I read Dumas. It is not the same thing.

My aunt returned at 4 o'clock, and at the end of five minutes I had artfully persuaded her to go and see the Church of

Digitized by Google

Santa Maria Maggiore. It was half-past 4, and I was afraid I had made a mistake in sending her away before 5, for I was afraid that she would return too soon.

When Count A— was announced I was still alone, for my aunt decided to visit the Pantheon, as well as Santa Maria Maggiore. My heart beat so strongly that I feared it could be heard, as they say in novels.

He sat down beside me and began by taking my hand, which I immediately withdrew. Then he told me that he loved me. I repulsed him, smiling politely.

"My aunt will be back soon," I said, "have patience."

"I have so many things to tell you."

"Really!"

"But your aunt will return."

"Then hurry!"

"These are serious things."

"Indeed!"

"In the first place, you were wrong to write all those things of me."

"Don't speak of that, Monsieur; I warn you that I am very nervous; and it will be well for you to speak simply, or to say nothing."

"Listen! I have spoken to my mother, and my mother has spoken to my father."

"Well?"

"I have done right, have I not?"

"It does not concern me. What you have done, you did for yourself."

"You do not love me."

"No."

"And I love you madly."

"So much the worse for you," said I, smiling, and allowing him to take my hands.

"No, listen," he said, "let us speak seriously; you are never serious. I love you. I have spoken to my mother. Be my wife."

Digitized by Google

"At last!" I thought to myself, but I said nothing.

"Well?" he asked.

"Well?" I answered, with a smile.

"You know," he said, encouraged, "that someone must manage it all."

"What?"

"Yes. I can not do it myself. Some one must take charge of it, some dignified, respectable, serious man, who will speak to my father, and, in a word, arrange everything. Who shall it be?"

"Visconti," I said, laughing.

"Yes," said he, very seriously. "I have thought of Visconti, he is just the man. He is so old that he is no longer good for anything except to play Mercury. But," he added, "I am not rich, not rich at all. Ah, I wish I were a hunchback and had millions!"

"It would not advance you any in my favor, if you had millions."

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

"I think that that is an insult," said I, rising.

"No, I was not thinking of you; you are an exception."

"Then, don't speak to me of money."

"Heavens! how touchy you are! One can never understand what you want. Consent, consent to be my wife!"

He tried to kiss my hand, but I presented to him the cross of my rosary, which he kissed; then, raising his head, and looking at me, he said:

"How religious you are!"

"And you believe in nothing."

"I—I love you. Do you love me?"

"I don't say such things."

"Then, for heaven's sake, at least, show it to me in some way."

After an instant's hesitation, I held out my hand to him.

"You consent?"

Digitized by Google

"Gently," I said, rising; "you see that there are my father and my grandfather, who will strongly oppose my marriage with a Catholic."

"Oh, that is still in the way, is it?"

"Yes, that is still in the way."

He took me by the arm, and placed me beside him before the glass. We made a very handsome couple.

"We will put Visconti in charge," said A—.

"Yes."

"He is the right man. But, as we are young to marry, do you think that we shall be happy?"

"In the first place, my consent is necessary."

"Certainly. Well, then, *if* you consent, shall we be happy?"

"*If* I consent, I swear by all that is holy that there will not be a man in the world happier than you."

"Then we will be married. Be my wife."

I smiled.

"Ah!" he cried, dancing about the room, "how happy I shall be! How odd it will be when we have children!"

"You are mad, Monsieur!"

"Yes, with love."

At this moment, the sound of voices was heard on the staircase. I sat down quietly and awaited my aunt, who entered the room immediately afterward.

There was a great weight lifted from my heart. I was very gay and A— was in the seventh heaven.

I was at peace and happy, but I had very many things to say and to hear.

Excepting our apartment, all the rest of the hôtel is empty. In the evening, we took a candle and wandered about all the immense apartments, perfumed still with the ancient grandeur of Italian palaces; but my aunt was with us. I did not know what to do.

We stopped more than half an hour in a large yellow *salon*, and Pietro imitated the Cardinal, his father, and his brothers.

Digitized by Google

My aunt amused herself by making Pietro write nonsense in Russian.

"Copy that," I said, taking a book and writing upon the first page.

"What?"

"Read."

I pointed out the following ten words:

"Go away at midnight; I will speak to you below."

"Do you understand?" I asked, rubbing it out.

"Yes."

From that time I was both relieved and singularly uneasy. Pietro kept looking at the clock every moment, and I feared that my aunt would understand the reason of it. As if she could have guessed! Only guilty consciences have such fears.

At midnight, he rose and said good-night to me, squeezing my hand hard as he did so.

"Good-night. Monsieur," said I.

Our eyes met, and somehow or other, there seemed to be a flash of light.

"Well, aunt, we leave to-morrow early. I will shut your door, so that I shall not disturb you by writing, and I will go to bed soon."

"You promise?"

"Certainly."

I shut my aunt's door, and, after a glance in the glass, I descended the stairs, and Pietro glided like a shadow from the half-open door.

"When one loves, one is silent and yet says so much. I, at least, love you!" he murmured.

I was amusing myself by acting a scene from a romance, and, involuntarily, I thought of Dumas.

"I am going away to-morrow. We must have a serious talk, and I was forgetting it."

"It is impossible to think of anything now."

Digitized by Google

"Come," said I, closing the door, so that there was only a feeble ray of light left.

And I sat down upon the last step of the little staircase which was at the end of the passage.

He knelt down beside me.

Every moment I thought I heard some one coming, and I held my breath and trembled at every drop of rain that beat against the windows.

"It is nothing," said my impatient lover.

"It is easy for you, Monsieur. If any one should come, you would be flattered by it, while I should be ruined."

With my head bent down, I glanced at him from under my lids.

"With me?" he said, misunderstanding the meaning of my words, "With me? I love you too much; you are safe."

I held out my hand to him when I heard these noble words.

"Have I not always behaved properly and respectfully?"

"Oh, no, not always. Once you even wished to kiss me."

"Don't speak of that, please. Oh, I have asked you so many times to forgive me! Be good; forgive me!"

"I have forgiven you," I said, gently.

I felt so contented. Is this, I thought, the way one feels when one is in love? Is it serious? It seemed to me that he could not be in earnest, he was so preternaturally grave and tender.

I lowered my eyes before the extraordinary brilliancy of his.

"But see, again we have forgotten to talk of our plans; we must be serious and talk."

"Yes, let us talk."

"In the first place, what can we do, since you are going away to-morrow? Do not go, I implore you, do not go!"

"I must; my aunt—"

"She is so kind! Oh, stay!"

"She is kind, but she will not consent. So, good-bye—perhaps forever."

Digitized by Google

"No, no, you have consented to be my wife!"

"When?"

"Toward the end of the month I shall go to Nice. If you would consent to let me borrow some money from someone, I would go to-morrow."

"No, I do not wish it; I would not see you in that case."

"But you can not prevent me from taking a pleasure trip to Nice?"

"Yes, yes, yes, I forbid you!"

"Then I must wait until my father gives me some money."

"I hope that he will be reasonable."

"He is not opposed to our marriage, my mother has spoken to him; but suppose he does not give me any money? You know how miserably dependent upon him I am."

"Demand the money!"

"Advise me, you who reason like a book, who speak of the soul, and of God; advise me."

"Pray to God," I said, presenting my cross, and ready to laugh if he ridiculed my advice, or to keep my look of gravity if he took it seriously.

He looked in my impassive face, placed the cross against his forehead, and bowed his head in prayer.

"I have prayed," he said.

"Really?"

"Really. But let us continue. So we will put the whole matter in the hands of Baron V—."

"Very well."

I said: Very well, and I thought: CONDITIONALLY.

"But," I added, "it can not be arranged immediately."

"In two months?"

"Are you jesting?" I asked, as if it were the most impossible thing in the world.

"In six, then?"

"No."

"In a year?"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, in a year—you will wait?"

"If necessary, and provided that I can see you every day."

"Come to Nice, for, in a month, I am going to Russia."

"I will follow you."

"That can not be."

"Why not?"

"My mother would not allow it."

"No one can prevent me from traveling."

"Don't talk nonsense."

"But how I love you!"

I leant toward him, in order not to lose a single one of his words.

"I will love you always," he said; "Be my wife."

We then talked loving nonsense, nonsense which becomes divine, if one really loves.

"Yes, truly," he said, "it would be beautiful to pass our lives together—yes, to pass my life with you, always with you, at your feet, adoring you. We will grow old together, old as the hills, and we will love each other always. Yes, yes, yes—dear!"

He found no other words; but these, so commonplace, became, in his mouth, a caress.

He looked at me with his hands clasped together. Then we spoke sensibly awhile; and then he threw himself at my feet, and exclaimed, in a voice stifled with emotion, that I could not love him as he loved me, that it was impossible!

He proposed that we should tell each other our secrets.

"Oh, yours, Monsieur, do not interest me."

"Tell me how many times you have been in love, Mademoiselle."

"Once."

"With whom?"

"A man whom I did not know, whom I had seen a dozen times perhaps in the street, and who did not know that I was in existence. I was twelve years old then, and I never spoke to him."

Digitized by Google

"This is a fairy-tale."

"It is the truth."

"Why, it is a romance, a fantasy; it is impossible; it is a shadow!"

"Yes, but I do not feel ashamed that I loved him, or that he became to me a sort of divinity. I can compare him to no one, and, as a matter of fact, there is no one worthy to be compared to him."

"Where is he now?"

"I don't even know. He married, and he lives far away."

"What nonsense!"

And my absurd Pietro looked somewhat disdainful and incredulous.

"But it is true; I love you now, but in quite a different way."

"I give you all my heart, and you give me only half of yours," he said.

"Don't ask too much, and be satisfied with what you receive."

"But this is not all? Isn't there something else?"

"That is all."

"Pardon me, and allow me not to believe you this time."

(Notice his depravity.)

"You must believe the truth."

"I can not."

"So much the worse for you!" I exclaimed, in anger.

"It is beyond my comprehension," he said.

"That is because you are very depraved."

"Perhaps."

"Don't you believe that I have never permitted anyone to kiss my hand?"

"Pardon me, but I do not."

"Sit down beside me," I said, "let us talk, and tell me everything."

He told me all that had been said to him, and all he had said himself.

Digitized by Google

"You will not be angry," he said.

"I shall be angry only if you conceal anything from me."

"Well, you understand that my family is very well known here."

"Yes."

"And you are strangers in Rome."

"Well?"

"Well, my mother has written to several people in Paris."

"That is quite natural; and what do they say of me?"

"Nothing yet; but they can say what they like, I shall always love you."

"I have no need of indulgence."

"Now," he said, "there is religion."

"Yes, religion."

"Oh," he said, in the calmest manner possible, "become a Catholic."

I cut him short with a few *very severe* words.

"Do you want *me* to change *my* religion, then?" exclaimed A—.

"No. If you should do that, I should despise you."

As a matter of fact, I should have been displeased only on account of the Cardinal.

"How I love you! How beautiful you are! How happy we shall be!"

My only answer was to take his head in my hands and kiss him on the forehead, the eyes, the hair.

I did it more for his sake than my own.

"Marie! Marie!" cried my aunt, from above.

"What is it?" I asked, calmly, putting my head through the door of the apartment, so that my voice should appear to come from my room.

"It is 2 o'clock, you must go to sleep!"

"I will."

"Are you undressed?"

"Yes; let me write."

Digitized by Google

"Go to bed!"

"Yes, yes."

I went down again and found the place empty; the poor fellow had hidden himself under the staircase.

"Now," he said, resuming his place, "let us talk of the future."

"Go on."

"Where shall we live? Do you like Rome?"

"Yes."

"Then we will live in Rome; but not with my family, but by ourselves."

"Of course, by ourselves. In the first place, mamma would not permit me to live with my husband's family."

"She is quite right. And then, my family has such extraordinary ideas, it would be awful! We will buy a little house in the new quarter."

"I should prefer a large one."

And I made up a face behind his back.

"Well, a large one, then."

And we went on, or rather, he did, to make arrangements for the future.

It was plain that he was in a hurry to change his condition.

"We will go into society," said I, "and live in a great deal of style, shall we not?"

"Oh, yes; go on!"

"Yes, when two people have decided to pass their lives together, they must do it as pleasantly as possible."

"Most certainly. You know all about my family—but there is the Cardinal!"

"You must make your peace with him."

"Certainly, and I shall do so. You know the greater part of his fortune will go to the one who first has a son; so, we must have a son as soon as possible. Only I am not rich now."

"What matters it?" I answered, a little shocked; but, with an

Digitized by Google

effort, refraining from making a gesture of contempt. It was a trap, perhaps.

Then, as if wearied of this serious discourse, he bent his head.

"*Occhi neri*," I said, covering his eyes with my hand, for the look in them frightened me.

He threw himself at my feet, and said so much and so much that I became more on my guard than ever, and made him sit down by my side.

No, it is not a real love. In a real love there would be nothing mean or vulgar to say. I felt dissatisfied.

"Be sensible!"

"Yes," he said, clasping his hands, "I am sensible, I am respectful, I love you."

Did I really love him, or had I lost my head? Who could tell? And yet, from the moment that doubt exists, there is no longer any doubt.

"Yes, I love you," I said, taking both his hands and pressing them warmly.

He answered nothing. Perhaps he did not understand the importance I attached to my words, or perhaps he thought them quite natural. The loud beating of my heart was stilled. It was certainly a delicious moment, for he remained as motionless as I, and without speaking a word.

But I became frightened, and I told him that he must go.

"It is time."

"Already? Stay a minute longer near me. How happy we are like this! Do you love me?" he said. "And will you love me always—say, will you love me always?"

There was a shade of familiarity in his tone which displeased me, and seemed to me humiliating. "Always!" I answered, dissatisfied as I was; "always, and do you love me?"

"Oh, how can you ask such a question? Oh, my darling, I wish we could stay here forever!"

"We should die of hunger," I replied, humiliated at the

Digitized by Google

caressing name he had called me, and not knowing how to answer.

"But what a beautiful death! Then, in a year?" he said, eating me up with his eyes.

"In a year," I repeated, mechanically. I acted like a girl penetrated with love, full of it, inspired, grave, and solemn.

At this moment I heard my aunt, who, seeing the light still burning in my room, was becoming impatient.

"Do you hear?" I said.

We kissed one another, and I fled without a look backward. It was like a scene from a novel that I have read somewhere. Pshaw! I am disgusted with myself! Shall I always be my own critic, or is it because I don't love him at all?

"It is 4 o'clock!" called my aunt.

"In the first place, aunt, it is only ten minutes past 2, and in the second place, let me alone."

I undressed, thinking: If someone had seen me go down the stairs at midnight, and come up again at 2 o'clock, after two hours spent absolutely alone with one of the most dissipated of Italians, that someone would not believe the good God, if He should take the fancy to descend from heaven and declare how innocent it was.

I, myself, in the place of that someone, would not believe, and yet see! Can one distrust appearances enough? We often judge by them, and draw certain conclusions, when there is really *almost nothing*.

"It is frightful! You will die, sitting up so late," called my aunt.

"Listen," I said, opening her door; "don't scold or I won't tell you anything."

"What is it? Oh, what a girl!"

"In the first place, I have not been writing. I have been with Pietro."

"Where, you unhappy girl?"

"Down-stairs."

Digitized by Google

"How dreadful!"

"Ah, if you talk like that you shall hear nothing!"

"You have been with A—?"

"Yes."

"Well," she said, in a voice which made me tremble, "when I called you just now, I knew it."

"How?"

"I had a dream, in which your mother appeared to me, and said: 'Don't leave Marie alone with A—!'"

A cold shiver ran down my back as I comprehended the real danger I had been in. I expressed my fears that slanders would be written to Nice.

"There is nothing to say," said my aunt, "and if people dare to speak slanders, they don't dare to write them."

Nice, Tuesday, May 23d.—I would like to be certain of one thing. Do I love him or do I not?

I have allowed myself to think so much of greatness and wealth that Pietro seems to me a very insignificant person.

Ah! H—!

Suppose I wait! Wait for what? A millionaire prince, an H—. But if no one should come!

I try to persuade myself that A— is very good style; but, when I see him close, he does not seem so at all.

This is a sad day! I began Mademoiselle Colignon's portrait upon a background of pale-blue draperies. It is all sketched in, and I am really pleased with myself and with my subject, who makes an admirable model.

I know very well that it is too soon to hear from A—, and yet I am uneasy.

To-night, I love him. Shall I do well to accept him? As long as the love lasts it will be well, but afterward?

I really fear that mediocrity would drive me mad. I reason and discuss as if I were mistress of the situation. Ah! misery of misery!

To wait! To wait for what?

Digitized by Google

And if nothing comes? Bah! with my face, something will come, and the proof is—that I am scarcely sixteen, and I have already had two chances and a half to become a countess.

The *half* means Pietro.

Wednesday, May 24th.—This evening, when retiring, I kissed mamma.

"She kisses like Pietro," she said, laughing.

"Has he ever kissed you?"

"He has kissed *you*," said Dina, with a laugh, thinking that she was saying the most awful thing, and causing me keen regret, almost shame.

"Oh, Dina!" said I, with such an air that both mamma and my aunt cast on her a look of reproach and displeasure.

"Marie kissed by a man! Marie, the proud, the reserved, the haughty! Marie, who has made such fine speeches on that subject!"

This caused me great inward shame.

Indeed, why was I false to my principles? I will not admit that it was through weakness, through passion. If I admitted that, I should no longer respect myself. I can not say that it was through love. It is enough to be thought unapproachable. People are so accustomed to see me so, that they would not believe anything else, even if they saw it with their own eyes, and I have said so many severe things in regard to the proprieties of life, that I would not believe it myself if it were not for this journal.

Moreover, a girl should allow herself to be *approached* only by a man of whose love she is certain, for he will not betray her; while, with men who are simply flirting, she must be covered with sharp points, like a porcupine.

Be free with a serious, loving man; but be severe with a man of free manners!

Heavens! how glad I am that I have written exactly what I think.

Friday, May 26th.—My aunt said that A— was only a child.

Digitized by Google

"That is true," said mamma.

These words, which are perfectly just, show me that I have sullied myself for nothing (for I have sullied myself), and without either interest or love to excuse me. It is torturing!

After his departure in Rome, I looked in the glass, thinking that my lips had changed color. No one is so sensitive as I. Since my face was sullied, I feel as soiled as after a twenty-four hours' journey in a railway train.

A— will have the right to say that I loved him, and that I am very unhappy at this broken engagement.

A broken engagement is always a stain on the life of a young girl.

Everyone will say that we were in love; but no one will say that the refusal came from me. We are neither popular nor powerful enough for that; besides, appearances will justify those who talk. It enrages me!

I should never have gone so far, if V— had not said these words: "Oh, my child, you are still very young!" Indeed, I needed to hear all his offers of marriage, in order to appease my wounded pride. Notice that I never said anything positive; I left it to him to speak; but, as I allowed him to take my hands and kiss them, the presumptuous young man did not notice my manner, but happy and excited, suspected nothing.

I know well that he was serious; but I did not expect that the family and all these people would make such a rumpus about it. I did not expect it, because I was not speaking seriously.

I must say, that I think man is a sack filled with conceit and covered with vanity. One thing consoles me a little; before the grand explanation, he often told me that he suffered much, and that I made him very unhappy with my coquetries and my icy heart. This is some consolation, but it is not enough.

They say that the blonde woman is the poetical woman; but I say that the blonde woman is the material woman, *par excellence.*

Digitized by Google

Look at the golden hair, the blood-red lips, the deep-gray eyes, and the rosy complexion that Titian paints so well, and tell me the thoughts that come to your mind. Moreover, we have Venus among the pagans, and Magdalen among the Christians—both blonde. While the woman who is a brunette, who is really as much of an anomaly as a blonde man, the dark woman, with her eyes like velvet, and her ivory skin, we can think of as pure and divine.

There is a beautiful picture of Titian's in the Borghese Palace, called "Pure Love and Impure Love." Pure love is a woman with rosy cheeks and dark hair, looking with a lovely expression at her child, whom she is bathing in a basin. Impure love is a blonde, with hair of reddish gold, leaning against something—I forget what—and with her arms crossed above her head. Moreover, the *normal* woman is light, and the *normal* man is dark.

The contrary varieties are sometimes admirable, but they are anomalies.

I shall never see anyone like the Duke of H—. He is tall and strong; he has hair of the hue of red gold, and a mustache of the same color; his eyes are gray, small but piercing, and his mouth is an exact copy of that of the Apollo Belvidere.

And there is, in his whole person, an air of such grandeur and majesty, of haughtiness even, and indifference to all others.

I see him, perhaps, with eyes prejudiced by love.

Bah! I don't think so!

How is it possible to love a very thin, ugly, dark man, with beautiful eyes indeed; but, with unformed manners, and no style at all, after a man like the duke, even after a lapse of three years? And, remember, that three years, from thirteen to sixteen, in the life of a young girl, are three centuries.

So I love no one but the duke! He will not be proud of it; in fact, it will make little difference to him, one way or the

Digitized by Google

other. I often compose stories, in which I have as characters men I know, and men I do not know, and not even to an Emperor could I say, "I love you" with conviction. There are some to whom I could not say it at all. Stop there! I have said it in reality.

Heavens! yes; but I thought it so little, that it is not worth mentioning.

Sunday, May 28th.—After my walk, returned home and sat down at the window. It is odd, but nothing seems changed. It seems to me that it is last year. Never have the songs of Nice appeared so charming to me; the chirp of the crickets, the murmur of the fountain, the distant song, and all this vulgarized by the noise of a prosaic carriage.

I am reading Horace and Tibullus. The latter speaks only of love, and that suits me. And then I have the Latin and French text side by side; that is good exercise for me. If only all this matrimonial matter, that I have so foolishly stirred up, does not injure me! I am afraid of it!

I ought to have promised nothing to A—. I ought to have said to him:

"I thank you, Monsieur, for the honor that you have done me, but I can not say anything to you until I have consulted my family. Let your people present the matter before mine, and we shall see. As for me," I might have added, to soften this answer, "I have nothing against it."

This, accompanied by one of my pleasant smiles and my hand to kiss, would have been sufficient; I should not have compromised myself; they would not be talking in Rome, and all would be well. I have sense enough, but it always comes too late.

It would doubtless have been better for me to have made him some such fine answer; but that would have lost me so much pleasure, and then, life is short, and then—ah! there is always an "and then." I was wrong not to have made my fine answer, but then I was so troubled. Sensible people will

Digitized by Google

say, yes, I was wrong; sentimental people will say, no, I was not.

Wednesday, May 31st.—Has not some one said that great minds think alike? I have been reading La Rochefoucauld, and I find in him many things that I have written here. I, who thought that I had found something new, and yet they are only things that have been known and said such a long time. Then I read, also, Horace, La Bruyère, and still another writer.

I am alarmed about my eyes. When I paint, I am obliged to stop very often, as my sight fails me. I use my eyes too much, for I pass all my time in painting, reading, and writing.

This evening I reviewed my classics and that kept me occupied; and then I discovered a very interesting work upon Confucius, with a Latin and French translation. There is nothing like an occupied mind; work, especially brain-work, fights and conquers everything.

I can not understand women who pass their time in knitting or embroidering, the hands busy and the mind idle. There must come a host of useless, dangerous thoughts, and if there is any special thing weighing upon the heart, the mind will dwell upon that and produce disastrous results.

If I were peaceful and happy, I could work with my hands, possibly, and think of my happiness. No, then I would want to think of it with my eyes closed and would be incapable of doing anything whatever.

Ask all those who know me what they think of my temperament, and they will tell you I am the gayest, most light-hearted, and the happiest girl in the world, as well as the most self-reliant; for I take great pleasure in appearing radiant and proud, impregnable in every way, and I willingly enter into discussions of all sorts, both serious and playful.

In these pages, my inner self appears; externally, I am quite another being. One would say that I had never been crossed

Digitized by Google

in my life, and that I was accustomed to be obeyed by men and things.

Saturday, June 3d.—Just now, as I left my study, I received such a ghastly fright. I saw by my side a woman clothed in a long white robe, a light in her hand, her eyes fixed on me, and with her head bent plaintively forward, like the phantoms of the German legends. Do not be frightened, it was only my own reflection in a mirror!

Oh, I am afraid, I am afraid that some physical ill will follow these mental tortures! Why has everything turned against me?

Forgive me for crying, oh, God! There are people more unhappy than I; there are people who are in want of bread, while I sleep under lace coverlids; there are people who bruise their feet upon the stones of the streets, while I walk upon carpet; there are people who have only the sky over them, while I have above my head a ceiling of blue satin. Perhaps, oh, God! you are punishing me for my tears; grant, then, that I may weep no more.

To all that I have suffered already is now added a personal shame, a shame that eats up my heart.

"Count A— asked her hand in marriage, but his family opposed the match; he changed his mind, and withdrew."

See how good impulses are rewarded!

Oh, if you knew what feelings of despair take possession of my being, what unspeakable sadness I feel, when I look about me! Everything I touch vanishes, crumbles!

And again my imagination works, and again I seem to hear: "Count A— asked her hand in marriage," etc.

Sunday, June 4th.—When Jesus cured the lunatic, His disciples asked Him why, when they tried, they could not cast out devils, and Jesus answered them: "Because of your unbelief; for, verily I say unto you: If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain: Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Digitized by Google

As I read these words, it seemed as if a great light broke in upon me, and, for the first time, perhaps, I believed in God. I rose, a changed being; I joined my hands, I raised my eyes, I smiled, I was in an ecstasy.

Never, never will I doubt again, not in order to deserve something, but because I am convinced of what I believe.

Up to the time I was twelve years old, I was spoiled, all my wishes were granted, but my education was neglected. At twelve I asked for masters, they were given to me, and I, myself, arranged the schedule of my studies. I owe everything to myself.

After this enthusiastic outburst, I was afraid of falling into exaggeration, afraid of the convent. Oh, no, I was transformed, I was overflowing with joy, I slept well, and I awoke more calm.

Monday, June 5th.—Dina, Mademoiselle Colignon, and I remained until 10 o'clock upon the terrace. It was bright moonlight and the whole sea was bathed in the rays. I discussed friendship and the relations one ought to have with one's fellow-beings. I made my profession of faith. The subject was brought up because of the Sapogenikoffs, who have not yet written.

Mademoiselle Colignon's admiration for them, everybody knows; besides, she must, perforce, adore someone; she is the most romantic and most sentimental woman in the world. She likes to prove her friendship by blind confidence.

I, the contrary.

Think, then, how unhappy I should be if I had vowed a great friendship to the Sapogenikoffs.

One never regrets a kindness, a gentleness, an act of amiability, a heartfelt impulse, except when one is repaid with ingratitude. And it is a very great sorrow for a person who has any heart, to know that the sympathy one has felt, the friendship one has had for someone, is wasted.

"Oh, Marie, I do not agree with you!"

Digitized by Google

"Now, listen to me, Mademoiselle. Take me, for instance, who exhaust myself in explaining to you something, wear myself out reasoning with you, and when I have spoken, argued, and reasoned, I find that you are no nearer agreeing with me than before."

"Oh, that, certainly!"

"I don't accuse you, I accuse no one of anything, because I expect nothing of any one. And the contrary of ingratitude is what would astonish me. I assure you that it is much better to look at life and men as I do, to accord them no place in your heart, and to use them like the steps of a ladder to ascend by."

"Marie! Marie!"

"Well, what would you have? You are differently constituted from me. Wait—I am sure that you have spoken disparagingly of me to the Sapogenikoffs and others. I am as sure of that as if I had heard it with my own ears. And yet, I am on the same terms with you as I was before, and shall be always."

"Reading philosophical works has given you such ideas; you distrust everybody."

"I do not *dis*-trust; I simply trust no one; there is a great difference."

"No, Marie, you feel friendship for no one."

"But think what it would be if I did! Suppose, that instead of having taken Marie and Olga for what they are, for good girls who laugh with me, not making fun of me as I do of them—suppose that I had become devotedly attached to Olga. I write to her from Rome and she answers me three words at the end of three weeks; I write her again, and this time she does not answer me at all. What do you say to that? And it is not the first example!"

"But how can you demand anything of your friends, if you give them nothing?"

"You don't understand me. I give them all the amiable things possible. I am ready to do for them all that it is in

Digitized by Google

my power to do; let one of them demand of me anything, and I will do it with pleasure; but I do not give my friends my heart, for, believe me, it is very annoying to give that for nothing."

"One can never be annoyed if one does right, if one does one's duty."

"Friendship is not a duty. You do neither right nor wrong in giving your friendship. Friendship like yours is not sensitive, for it is a perpetual need of your nature; but, when it comes from the bottom of the heart, it is very painful to have it repaid with ingratitude."

"If any one is ungrateful, so much the worse for him."

"See what it is to be egotistical. Once I thought that I loved everybody; but I see that that universal love was only a universal indifference. I have the best of feelings toward my fellow-beings. I see that they are bad, which renders me indulgent to a supreme degree. Have you read Epictetus? I think that, as far as friendship is concerned, one should be a stoic. You receive a shock, and you can not prevent yourself from making a movement of surprise, of fear; that does not depend on yourself; but it does depend on yourself to acquiesce or not in your first sentiments. One can not prevent one's self from feeling certain preferences, but one can prevent one's self from *acquiescing* in them."

"These readings of yours lead to atheism; you will end, Marie, by believing in nothing."

"Oh, no! If you knew my thoughts, you would not say so."

"All philosophers are bad to read."

"Not when one has a well-balanced mind. But I will say this, taking everything into consideration, there is only one thing that is worth anything in this world (I speak of matters of sentiment) and that is love."

"Yes."

"There is nothing in the world that gives greater pleasure than to love and to be loved."

Digitized by Google

"That is true."

"And yet, do not let us analyze the matter too closely, for pity's sake. Let us take only the pleasure that is given us, and that we give. Love is a divine thing in itself, I mean while it lasts; it renders a man perfect toward the object loved; devotion, tenderness, passion, constancy, sincerity, all are there. Let us analyze the love, then, but never the man. Man can be compared to a grotto. One finds there humidity or foulness in the depths of it, or, perhaps, an exit, that is to say, there is no depth at all. All this does not prevent me from loving my fellow-beings."

"You can not enjoy anything, if you are indifferent to everything."

"Wait, wait, I am not indifferent, but I judge people only by their value."

Mamma wept to-day, and my aunt's face wore a troubled expression; they had been speaking of me, and of all my torments.

I returned home, with my arms hanging down, my eyes fixed, and my brows drawn together in a frown. I was stifling in spite of the blue sky, the sparkling fountain, the medlar trees all covered with fruit, and the pure air. I walked on, without taking any notice of anything.

Why not suppose that I love him, all unworthy as he is?

Heaven! Explain to me what this man is, and what is this love!

All must be crushed out of me—conceit, pride, and love.

Tuesday, June 6th.—I read over yesterday; there is nothing but sorrow and tears.

Toward 2 o'clock, I was enough recovered to feel no more anger, and to sigh only with disgust. These thoughts are unworthy; one should remember injuries only when one is in a position to be avenged. To think of them is to accord too much importance to unworthy people; it is lowering to one's

Digitized by Google

self; so it is not of the people that I think, but of myself, of my position, and the thoughtlessness of my relations. For all these evils have come from the latter.

If the A—s had raised the question of religion, that would only have amused me; and I am sure, that if they came now and begged me to take Pietro, I would not take him.

But it is this shameful idea that they have been told evil things of us!

For everybody has spoken of this marriage, and it is very certain that they will not say that the refusal comes from me. Moreover, they will be right. Did I not consent? Oh, if I could drag him away, keep him under all circumstances! I do not repent; and, if it has turned out badly, it is not my fault.

People do not know us; they hear a word here, a word there; they talk, they exaggerate, they invent! Oh, heaven! and to be able to do nothing!

Understand, I am not complaining, I am simply stating facts.

I thoroughly despise the whole world; therefore, I can not complain, or be angry with anyone.

Such love as I have imagined, does not exist, then? It is only a fancy, an ideal!

Supreme modesty, supreme purity are then only words that I have invented?

So, when I went down to speak to him, the night before I left Rome, he saw in my action simply an assignation.

When I lent upon his arm, he trembled only with desire! When I looked at him, seriously and earnestly, as an ancient priestess, he saw only a woman and an appointment!

And I—did I not love him? No! or, rather, I loved him only because of his love for me.

But, as I am incapable of cowardice in love, I loved and felt as if it was I, myself, who loved him.

It was exaltation, fanaticism, myopia, stupidity—yes, stupidity.

Digitized by Google

If I had more sense, I should have understood better the character of the man.

He loved me as well as he could. I should have been more discerning, and understood that pearls must not be cast before swine.

The punishment is hard—illusions forever destroyed, and remorse for my own actions; I was wrong to think as I did. I must be like others—prosaic and commonplace.

It is, doubtless, my great youth, which has made me do senseless things. What are these ideas of the other world? They are not understood, for the world has not changed.

There, I fall into the common error, and blame the world for the villainy of one alone. Because one person has been a coward, I deny all greatness of soul and mind.

I deny the love of this man, because he has done nothing for this love. Suppose they have threatened to disinherit him and turn him out with a curse, should that prevent him from writing to me? No, no! He is a coward!

Thursday, June 8th.—The philosophical books surprise me. They are products of imagination which overthrow everything. In time, and by reading much, I shall get used to them, but at present they take away my breath.

What do you think of Fourier? And then this idea of Jouffroys: "The soul is scattered abroad under the pressure of sensation, and then returns to its shell, when the object is taken away." It is surprising, but stupid.

When the fever of reading takes possession of me, I become wild, and it seems to me that I shall never read enough. I long to know everything, and my head seems splitting, and I am like one enveloped in a cloud of ashes and chaos.

I hasten madly to read Horace.

Oh, when I think that there are lucky people who are full of life, who dress, laugh, dance, talk, love, in short, give themselves up to all the delights of a worldly existence, while I rust at Nice!

Digitized by Google

I am resigned enough, however, so long as I do not remember that one lives but once. Just think, *one lives but once*, and life is so short!

When I think of that, I become mad, and my brain seems bursting with despair.

One lives but once! And I am losing this precious life, hidden in a house, seeing no one!

One lives but once! And my life is being spoiled!

One lives but once! And I am forced to waste my time! And the days roll by, roll by never to return, and shorten my life!

One lives but once! Must this life, short as it is, be shortened still more, spoiled, stolen; yes, stolen by outrageous circumstances?

Oh, Lord! have pity!

Friday, June 9th.—As I read over my stay at Rome and my anxieties over Pietro's disappearance, I am astonished that I wrote with so much feeling. I read and shrug my shoulders. I ought not to be astonished—I who know how easily I am affected.

There are moments when I do not know what I detest, what I love, what I desire, nor what I fear. Then everything is indifferent to me; I try to analyze everything, and then there is such a disturbance in my brain that I shake my head, I stop my ears, and I prefer my *brutishness* to these searching analyses of myself.

Saturday, June 10th.—"Do you know," I said to the doctor, "that I spit blood, and I must be taken care of?"

"Oh, Mademoiselle!" replied Walitzky, "if you continue to sit up every night until 3 o'clock in the morning, you will have all sorts of troubles."

"And what do you think is the reason that I sit up late? Because my mind is ill at ease. Give me peace and I shall sleep peacefully!"

"You might have had peace. You had the opportunity at Rome."

Digitized by Google

"Who could have given it to me?"

"A—, if he had married you without change of religion."

"Oh, my friend Walitzky, how dreadful! A man like A—! Think of what you are saying! A man who has no opinions of his own, no will! What nonsense you are talking! Oh, really!"

And I began to laugh softly.

"He neither comes nor writes," I continued, "he is a poor child, *whose importance we have overestimated.* No, my dear Walitzky, he is not a man, and we were wrong to think otherwise."

I said these last words with the same calmness that I had exhibited during the whole of the conversation—a calmness resulting from the conviction that I was saying what was just and true.

I went to my own room, and a great light, as it were, seemed to shine in on my mind. I understood at last that I had done wrong to allow a kiss (a single one, indeed, but all the same a kiss), and to grant an interview at the foot of the staircase; that if I had not gone out into the hall or anywhere else, if I had not sought the tête à tête, the man would have had more consideration for me, and there would be no reason now for either anger or tears! (How I love myself for having written thus! What exquisite delicacy!—Paris, 1877.)

I must always remember this; I have done wrong, I have committed a folly, led astray by the attraction of novelty, by the ease with which I yield to impulse, and by my lack of experience.

Oh, how I see it all now!

Ah, good friends, what could be expected? The young always make mistakes. A— has taught me the proper way to treat suitors for my hand.

To live a hundred years, to learn a hundred years!

Oh, how clear is my vision, how calm I am, and how devoid of any love!

Digitized by Google

I shall go out every day, be gay, and hope.

Ah, son felice!
Ah, son rapita!

I sing 'Mignon,' and my heart is so full.

How beautiful is the moon and its reflection in the water! How adorable is Nice!

I love everybody. All the faces that pass by me are amiable and smiling.

It is all over! I knew well that it could not last. I want to lead a peaceful life. I will go to Russia, that will improve the situation, and I will bring my father back with me to Rome.

Monday, June 12th.—Tuesday, June 13th.—I longed to live seven lives at once, and I do not live a quarter of a life. I am chained down.

God will have pity upon me; but I know that I am weak, and it seems to me that I am going to die.

This is the truth of the matter: Either I must have all that God has permitted me to discern and to comprehend, in which case I shall be worthy of having it, or I shall die!

For God, if He can not justly grant me all, will not have the cruelty to impose life upon an unhappy creature to whom He has given comprehension and the ambition to acquire what she comprehends.

God has not made me what I am, without design. He can not have endowed me with the faculty of *seeing everything*, only to torment me by giving me nothing. Such a supposition is not in accordance with the nature of God, Who is a Being of justice and mercy.

I must have what I want, or I must die. There is no question of that. Let Him do as He thinks best! I love Him, I believe in Him, I bless Him, and I beg Him to forgive me for the wrong I do.

He has given me my comprehension of things to satisfy my longings, if I am worthy. If I am not worthy, He will let me die!

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, June 14th.—In addition to the triumph I have given this little Italian boy, which greatly vexes me, I see also the scandal which will result from this affair.

I did not expect an adventure of this kind; I foresaw nothing of the sort. I never imagined that such a thing could happen to me. I knew that such things did occur, but I did not really believe in them, and I knew nothing of them, as one who has never seen a corpse knows nothing of death. Oh, my life! my poor life!

If I am as pretty as I say, why am I not loved? People look at me and are attracted by me, but they do not love me—and I have so much need of love.

Is it the novels that I have read that have turned my head? No, but I read novels because my head is turned. I read over again old books. I seek with deplorable eagerness for scenes and words of love; I devour them because it seems to me that I love and that I am not loved.

I love; yes, for I will not give any other name to what I feel.

But, no, this is not what I desire. I long to go into the world. I long to shine there. I long for great rank. I long to be rich. I long for pictures, palaces, jewels. I long to be the center of a brilliant circle—political, literary, charitable, frivolous. I long for all this. May God give it to me!

My God, do not punish me for these foolishly ambitious thoughts!

Are there not people who are born in the midst of all this, who find it quite natural to possess it, and who do not thank God for it?

Am I to blame for wishing to be great?

No, for I would employ my greatness in thanking God and in desiring to be happy. Is it forbidden to desire to be happy?

Are those who find their happiness in a modest, comfortable house, less ambitious then? No, for they have no comprehension of anything beyond.

Digitized by Google

Is he, who is contented to pass his life humbly in the midst of his family, modest and moderate in his wishes, through virtue, resignation, or wisdom? No, no, no! He is so because he is happy thus; because to live obscurely is for him the height of happiness. And if he does not desire excitement, it is because he would find only unhappiness in excitement. There are also those who are afraid, and such people are not sages, but cowards, for they have secret longings and make no effort to obtain their desires, not through Christian virtue, but because of their timid and incapable nature. My God, if I reason badly, enlighten me, pardon me, have pity upon me!

Thursday, June 22d.—I used to curl my lip when Italy was praised, and I would ask why so much fuss was made about the country, and why it was spoken of as a land quite superior to others. It *is* superior to other lands; the atmosphere one breathes here is different. Life is not the same as it is in other places; it is free, fantastic, broad, thoughtless and languishing, fiery and gentle, like its sun, its sky, its soil. So I soar aloft on my poet's wings (I am sometimes entirely a poet, and almost always one on some side of my nature) and I am ready to exclaim with "Mignon":

Italia, reggio di ciel,
Sol beato!

Saturday, June 24th.—I was waiting to be called to breakfast, when the doctor arrived all out of breath to tell me that he had received a letter from Pietro. I blushed scarlet, and without raising my eyes from the book I was reading, I asked: "Well, and what does he say?"

"They will not give him any money, and—well, you will be able to judge from the letter better than I can."

I took care not to evince any eagerness to see it, for I was ashamed of showing so much interest.

Contrary to my usual habits, I was the first at the table, eating with impatience, but saying nothing.

"Is what the doctor has told me true?" I asked, at last.

Digitized by Google

"Yes," replied my aunt, "A— has written him."

"Doctor, where is the letter?"

"In my room."

"Get it for me."

The letter is dated the tenth of June, but as A— directed it simply to Nizza, it went to Nizza in Italy before being sent here.

"I have employed all my time," he writes, "in begging my parents to allow me to go to Nice, but they absolutely refuse to listen to it," so it is impossible for him to come, and there is nothing left for him but to hope in the future, which is always uncertain.

The letter is in Italian and they expected me to translate it. I did not say a word, however; but, gathering up my train with affected deliberation, so that they might not think that I was going away in agitation, I left the room and crossed the garden, tranquillity upon my face and hell in my heart.

This is no answer to a telegram from a friend in Monaco, no trifle. It is an answer to me, a warning. And it is to me, who have soared so high in my imagination, to *me* that he says this! Shall I die? God does not wish it. Shall I become an opera singer? I have neither the health nor the patience.

Then what, what?

I threw myself down in an arm-chair, and with my eyes fixed blindly upon nothing, tried to understand the letter, to think of something.

"Do you want to go to the clairvoyant's?" called mamma to me from the garden.

"Yes," I answered, rising stiffly; "when?"

"Now, at once."

Anything, anything in order not to remain alone and drive myself crazy; anything to escape from myself.

The clairvoyant was out. The walk in the heat did me neither harm nor good. I took a handful of cigarettes and my journal, with the intention of poisoning my lungs while

Digitized by Google

writing blazing pages. But all will power seemed to have left me. I walked, straight and slow, as in a dream, to my bed, laid down, and drew the lace curtains.

It is impossible to describe my suffering; besides, there comes a moment when one no longer knows how to complain. Crushed as I am, of what do you want me to complain?

I can not give any idea of the profound disgust and discouragement that I feel. Love! Oh, word unknown to me! This is the truth, then? This man never loved me, and he regarded marriage as a means of obtaining his freedom. As for his protestations, I throw them on one side. I have never spoken of them to anyone, in fact, I never believed in them sufficiently to speak seriously of them.

I do not say that he has always lied. A man almost always believes what he is saying at the moment that he speaks, but —afterward?

And, in spite of all my reasoning power, in spite of the Bible, I am burning to be revenged. I will take my time, be sure of that, and I *will* be revenged.

Chi lungo a tempo aspetta,
Vede al fin la sua vendetta.

I entered my room, wrote a few lines, and, then, suddenly losing courage, burst into tears. Oh, after all, I am only a child! All these troubles are *too heavy* for me to bear *all alone!* I thought of going to waken my aunt. But she would think that I was crying from disappointed love, and I could not bear that.

To say that love has no place in my sorrow, would be only justice. I am ashamed of it now.

A little boy, the butt of everybody, a compound of a scoundrel and a Jesuit, a child, a Paul! And I loved that! Bah! And yet, why not? A man loves a *cocotte*, a *grisette*, anything low, a peasant. Great men and great kings have loved

Digitized by Google

women who amounted to nothing, and they have not been dethroned for that.

I was becoming mad with rage and the sense of how powerless I was. All my nerves were unstrung, and I began to sing; this calmed me:

Quanti ce n'è che s'entendomi cantare,
Diran: Viva colei che a il cor contenta.
S'io canto, canto per non dir del male!
Faccio per revelar quel c'ho qui dentro,
Faccio per revelar un 'afflitta doglia,
Sebbene io canto, di piangere ho voglia,
Faccio per revelar l'afflitta pena,
Sebbene io canto, di dolor son piena.

I might remain here all night and not be able to say all that I want to say, and if I could succeed in doing so, I should say nothing new, nothing that I have not said already.

Really, really, all the things that I saw and heard in Rome come into my mind, and as I reflect upon that strange mixture of devotion, libertinage, religion, vulgarity, submission, depravity, prudery, haughty pride, and low cowardice, I say to myself: In truth, Rome is a unique city—strange, savage, and refined.

Everything is different there from what it is in other cities. You seem to be upon another planet than the earth.

And, really, Rome, which had a fabulous beginning, a fabulous prosperity, and a fabulous downfall, must be something impressive and original, both morally and physically.

The city of God, the city of priests, I am speaking of. Since the king has been there, all is changed, and yet, that change is only among the liberals.

The *blacks* are always the same. For this reason, I understood nothing of what A— said to me, and I always regarded his affairs as fables, or as things entirely outside of ordinary experience, while I see now that it is the same everywhere in Rome.

Digitized by Google

Why did I encounter that inhabitant of the moon, of the old moon, of old Rome, I mean, a Cardinal's nephew!

Bah! it is curious for me who love the extraordinary. It is original. No, they are all alike—Rome and the Romans—strange.

Instead of being astonished, I would do better to tell what I know of Rome and the Romans; this would astonish much more than my astonishments and my exclamations.

Do you know that when Pietro, six years ago, was very ill, his mother made him eat strips of paper, on which was written over and over again, this word: *Maria, Maria, Maria!* This was done so that the Virgin would cure him. It was, perhaps, for this reason that he fell in love with a Marie, and a very terrestrial one, too. They also made him drink holy water instead of taking medicine.

But, after all, that doesn't amount to anything. I shall gradually remember everything and tell very curious things.

The Cardinal, for example, is not a good man, and when they told him that his nephew was improving himself in a monastery, he laughed, and said that it was all nonsense, that a man of twenty-three would not become wise at the end of eight days' seclusion, and that, if he seemed converted, it was because he needed money.

Friday, June 30th.—I pity old people, especially since grandpapa became entirely blind; I am so sorry for him. To-day, I led him down-stairs, and helped him at the table myself. He was ashamed of it, because he has a desire to appear still young, and I was obliged to use considerable tact. However, he accepted my services gratefully, for I proffered them in an off-hand sort of way, with a mingling of determination and tenderness, which he could not resist.

Sunday, July 2d.—Oh, what heat! what *ennui!* I am wrong to say *ennui*, however, (that one can never feel who has so many resources in one's self as I have). I do not feel *ennui*, for I read, sing, paint, and dream; but I am sad and uneasy.

Digitized by Google

Must my poor young life be passed in eating and drinking and domestic trivialities? A woman lives from sixteen to forty. I tremble at the thought of losing a month of my life.

Why have I studied and tried to know more than other women—priding myself on knowing all the sciences which famous men are said, in their biographies, to have known?

I have a smattering of everything, but I know thoroughly only history, literature, and physics. When I say that I have a smattering of *everything*, I mean everything that is interesting; but it is true, that, if I put my mind to it, I find everything interesting, and this puts me in a fever.

What is the use of reading and reflecting? What is the use of the gift of song, of mind, of beauty? To rust, to die of sadness? If I were an ignorant brute, I might, perhaps, be happy.

Not a living soul with whom to exchange a word! One's family does not suffice for a being of sixteen, especially such a being as I am!

Grandpapa is certainly an intelligent man; but he is old, and blind, and irritating, with his servant Triphon, and his eternal complaints about the dinner.

Mamma has much intelligence, very little learning, no knowledge of the world, not an atom of tact, and her mind has deteriorated through dwelling on nothing but the servants, my health, and the dogs.

My aunt is a little more polished, and even impresses people who do not know her very well.

Have I ever mentioned their ages? If she were in good health, mamma would still be a very handsome woman. My aunt is some years younger, but she appears the elder; she is not handsome, but tall, and with a good figure.

Monday, July 3d.—Amor decrescit ubique crescere non possit.*

* In Syrus, it is *dolor*. I have said *amor*, for the maxim is as applicable to one as to the other.

Digitized by Google

Therefore, when two people are perfectly happy, they begin imperceptibly to love each other less, and end by drifting entirely apart.

I am going away to-morrow, and I feel a certain regret at leaving Nice.

All the preparations for the journey have cast a certain chill over my determination to go.

I have chosen the music that I am going to take away and some books—the encyclopedia, a volume of Plato, Dante, Ariosto, Shakespeare, and a quantity of English novels by Bulwer, Collins, and Dickens. I talked a little nonsense with my aunt, and then I went out on the terrace. I remained in the garden until the twilight, which is so beautiful with the sea and the sky for a background; and the rich plants, the large-leaved trees, the bamboos and the palms; the fountain; the grotto, with its drops of water falling ceaselessly from rock to rock until they reach the basin—the whole surroundings give the spot an air of mysterious peace, which makes one idle and dreamy. Why does water always make one dreamy?

I remained in the garden, looking at a vase in which grew a beautiful canna rose, and thinking how becoming my white dress and green wreath were in this delicious garden.

Have I then no other object in life than to dress with so much art, and ornament myself with leaves and think of the effect?

Frankly, I believe if I am read, I shall be adjudged tiresome. I am still so young, I know so little of life.

I can not speak with that authority or that impudence belonging to writers who have the exorbitant pretension of knowing men, of dictating laws, and of imposing maxims.

My maid has brought me a bodice for to-morrow, that I might look at it. That reminds me that to-morrow I leave.

I came home followed by all the dogs. I drew the white box close to the table. Ah, there is my principal regret! My

Digitized by Google

journal is the half of myself. Each day I had the habit of looking through the leaves of my journal, whether I wished to recall Rome or Nice, or things still prior!

The weather was too beautiful!

And, as if on purpose, the eve of my departure, the moon shone brilliant and pale, lighting up all the beauties of my city. *My*—without doubt—*my city!* I am of too little consequence for anyone to contest my claim to this property.

Besides, does not the sun belong equally to all? I entered the *salon*. The rays of the moon penetrated freely through the large open windows, lighting the walls of white stucco and the white coverings.

In spite of ourselves, we feel melancholy on a summer night like this. I walked around the room twice, something was wanting; nevertheless, I was not unhappy, on the contrary, I desired nothing. I should wish to always feel as quiet, as well. My soul, dilated by this sentiment of happy calm, seemed to want to pour itself forth all around me. I sat at the piano and allowed my long, white fingers to wander over the keys; but I missed something—perhaps someone.

I am going to Russia. How willingly I would go to bed early on the eve of a day so impatiently awaited, in order to shorten the time!

I am drawn toward Rome. Rome is a city we do not understand at first. In the first days, I saw in Rome only the Pincio and the Corso. I could not understand the simple beauty and all the memories clustering around this country, without trees, and without houses. Nothing but an undulating plain, like the ocean in a storm, dotted here and there by flocks of sheep, guarded by shepherds, like those spoken of by Virgil.

It is only our own degenerated class which undergoes a thousand transformations; and simple men, men of nature, change not, and resemble each other in all countries.

Side by side, with this vast solitude interspersed with aqueducts, the straight lines of which, cutting the horizon,

Digitized by Google

produce the most striking effect, we see the most beautiful monuments of barbarism, and of universal civilization. Why say barbarism? It is because we, modern pigmies, in our petty pride, believe ourselves more civilized, because we were born last.

No description can give an exact idea of this superb and graceful country, of this land of the sun, of beauty, of intellect, of genius, of the arts; of this country, fallen so low and remaining prostrate so long that it is impossible for it to be yet in a condition to rise again.

Talk as we may of glory, of intellect, of beauty, we speak of them only to speak of love; to make a magnificent frame for this picture, always the same and always new.

To leave my journal here, is a real sorrow.

This poor journal, which contains all those aspirations toward light, all those flights which would be estimated as the flights of an imprisoned genius, if the end were crowned with success, and would be regarded as the delirious vanity of a commonplace creature, if I were doomed to rust forever.

For me to marry and have children! Why, any washerwoman can do so much.

At least, let me find a man civilized and enlightened, or weak and very loving!

But what do I want? Oh, you know it well; I want fame!

It is not this journal which will give it me. This journal will be published only after my death, for in it I am *too naked* to show myself during life. Besides, it can be only the complement of an illustrious life.

An illustrious life! Folly, produced by isolation, historical readings, and a too vivid imagination!

I do not know any language perfectly. My own is familiar to me, only as far as everyday phrases go. I left Russia at the age of ten. I speak Italian and English well. I think and write in French, and yet I believe I commit faults of orthog-

Digitized by Google

raphy; and frequently, I am at a loss for words, and I find, with a fury without parallel, my thought expressed by a celebrated writer, with facility and grace!

Listen, rather: "Traveling is, whatever we may say, one of the saddest pleasures of life. If you find yourself comfortable in a strange city, it is because you are beginning to feel at home."

This was said by the author of "Corinne." And how many times I have become impatient, my pen in hand, because I was not able to make myself understood, and have ended by bursting out into expressions like this—I detest new cities; new faces are a martyrdom for me!

All persons, therefore, feel in the same manner; the difference exists only in the expression, as all men are made of the same materials; but how much they differ in features, form, complexion, character!

You shall see that one of these days I shall read something of this kind, but expressed with intelligence, with eloquence, with charm.

What am I? Nothing. What do I wish to be? Everything.

Rest awhile, my intellect, fatigued by these thirstings, these bounds, after the infinite. Let us return to A—. Still A—. A child! a wretch!

No! Is it not rather that he does not quite love me?

He loves me as I love him. Oh, then it is not worth speaking of! No! The principal thing is that I leave my journal here.

There, that block of paper is finished! When I reach Paris, I will commence another, which will doubtless suffice me for Russia.

No one will notice a block of paper at the Custom House.

I will take with me Pietro's last letter.

I have just reread it. He is unhappy! Then why has he not more energy?

Digitized by Google

In my exceptionally despotic position, I can speak of the matter without embarrassment—but he! And those Romans! It is something unheard of.

Poor Pietro! My future fame prevents my thinking seriously of him. It seems to reproach me, the thoughts that I consecrate to him.

Dear divinity, be reassured. Pietro is but an amusement—*a melody to cover the lamentations of my soul.* And, nevertheless, I reproach myself for thinking of him, since it is of absolutely no use! He can not even be the first step of that divine ladder, at the top of which is found satisfied ambition.

GRAND HOTEL, PARIS, July 4th.

Amor, ut lacryma, oculo oritur in pectus cadit.

PUBLIUS SYRUS.

Wednesday, July 5th.—Yesterday, at 2 o'clock, I left Nice with my aunt, and Amalia (my maid). Chocolate, having hurt his foot, will be sent after us in two days.

Mamma has been weeping for three days over my impending absence, and so I am sweet and tender to her.

Affections of husbands, of lovers, of friends, of children, come and go, for there can always be two of these beings.

But there is only one mother, and a mother is the only creature in which we can confide entirely, whose love is disinterested, devoted, and eternal. I felt all this for the first time, perhaps, when bidding her good-bye. And how I laughed over my love for H—, L—, and A—! And of what small consequence it all seemed to me! Nothing!

Grandpapa was moved to tears. Besides, there is always something solemn in the farewells of an old person. He blessed me and gave me an image of the Holy Virgin.

Mamma and Dina accompanied us to the station.

As usual, on leaving, I put on my gayest air. I was, nevertheless, much grieved.

Mamma did not weep, but I knew she was so unhappy that

Digitized by Google

I felt something like a flood of regrets at leaving her, and because I had often been cross to her. But, thought I, looking at her through the window of our carriage, I was not cross through wickedness, I was so through pain, through despair, and now I go to change our lives.

When the train was in motion, I felt that my eyes were filled with tears. And I involuntarily compared this departure with my last departure from Rome.

Was it that my sentiment was weaker, or that I did not feel that I was leaving behind me an immense grief like that of a mother's?

I began immediately to read "Corinne." That description of Italy has a peculiar charm for me. And with what happiness I again saw Rome in this reading! My beautiful Rome with all its treasures!

I admit frankly that at first I did not understand Rome. My strongest impression was the Coliseum, and, if I could write as I think, I would have expressed a multitude of very beautiful thoughts that came to me, when standing mute in the lodge of the Vestals, opposite that of Cæsar.

At half-past 1 we entered Paris, and, we must admit, Paris is, if not the most beautiful, at least the most graceful, the most witty of cities.

Has not Paris also its history of grandeur, of decadence, of revolution, of glory, and of terror? Oh, yes! But all pales before Rome, for it is of Rome that all other powers are born.

Rome has swallowed Greece, the home of civilization, of arts, of heroes, of poets. All that has been built, sculptured, thought, or done since, is it anything but imitation of the ancients?

With us there is nothing original but the Middle Ages. Oh, why? Why is the world worn out? Is it that the intellect of man has already given all that it could give?

Monday, July 10th.—Say what we will, weave what romances we may, power and splendor (vile goods of this world), form

Digitized by Google

an aureole about the head of those we love, and make us almost love *those we do not love.*

Notwithstanding the cries of all the *sentimentalists*, it is clearly demonstrated that the strongest intellects allow themselves to be influenced by external show, by the frame.

But let us leave that aside, and let us take the thing from the heart's point of view.

Is it not frightful to be separated by an absurd cause, to suffer doubt, absence, sadness, and all because of money! I scorn money, but I admit it is necessary.

When we are happy, physically, the mind and heart are free, we can then love without calculation, without after-thought, without niggardliness.

Why have so many women loved kings?

Because a king is the expression of power, and woman loves to rule; but she needs the support of something strong, as the frail and delicate plant leans against a tree.

See, I love A—, and this love is shaken at every instant, sometimes by doubt, sometimes by fear.

At each instant, crushed by wounded self-love, humiliated by that ignoble dependence, I might have loved much, I might have loved with a sentiment even, strong, durable, and, instead of that, I feel but a sort of torment, which makes me say sometimes yes, sometimes no; which renders me uncertain, undecided, mercenary, miserable.

No, do not attribute my conduct to frightful calculations. I do not love a man because he is rich, but because he is free, frank in all his movements. I want wealth that I may think no more of it, that I may be no more subjected to that force which is brutal, but incontestable, inevitable.

I open my mouth to speak again, but all I could say would always be reduced to this: Perfect moral happiness can exist only when the material side is satisfied, and does not oblige us to think of ourselves as an empty stomach.

The highest degree of love, passion, carries everything

Digitized by Google

before it, but for an instant only; and how we feel afterward the truth of all that I have just said. What I say, I have not read in books, I have not experienced; but let all those who have lived, who are no older than sixteen, like me, put aside that false shame we have in admitting such things, and let them admit it, let them say if what I am trying to prove is not just. *If anyone is contented with little, it is because he has no ambition to have more.*

Thursday, July 13th.—In the evening, we went to the house of Countess de M—. She spoke of marriage to me.

"Oh, no," said I, "I do not want that; I want to become a singer! See, dear countess, we must do this: I will disguise myself like a poor girl, and you, with my aunt, will conduct me to the first professor of singing in Paris, as a little Italian under your protection, and who has the promise of a fine voice."

"Oh! Oh!"

"Now, then," continued I, quietly, "that is the only way of knowing the truth about my voice. I have a little dress of last year which will produce an effect." I added, pursing up my lips.

"Why, yes, it is an excellent idea!"

My father telegraphs that he awaits me with impatience. Uncle Etienne telegraphs that he will meet me at the frontier. Uncle Alexander telegraphs that there is cholera in Russia. But I fear nothing, I am not a fatalist, and I do not believe that all things are written beforehand. I believe firmly that nothing happens without the will of God, and if God wishes me to die now, nothing can prevent it; while, if He has a long life in reserve for me, no epidemic in the world can harm me.

My aunt requests me to go to bed, for it is 1 o'clock. "Leave me alone!" said I to her, "if you annoy me I shall become crazy!"

Digitized by Google

My God! what idea troubles me again? Paris! Yes, Paris! the center of intelligence! of fame! of everything! Paris light and vanity—vertigo!

Oh, God! give me the life that I want, or make me die!

Friday, July 14th.—Since morning, I have been taking the greatest care of myself, I have not coughed once too much, I have not moved. I am dying of heat and of thirst, but I do not drink.

At 1 o'clock, I took a cup of coffee, and ate one egg, so salty that it was rather salt with an egg, than an egg with salt.

I have an idea that salt is good for the throat.

I put on a plain dress of gray cambric, a black lace scarf, and a brown hat. But, once dressed, I looked so well, that I wished I could always look the same.

At last, we started, stopped for Madame de M—, and arrived at the door of No. 37 Chaussée-d' Antin, at the home of Monsieur Wartel, the first professor of Paris.

Madame de M— went in and spoke to him of a young girl from Italy who had been particularly recommended to her. Her parents wished to know if there were any hopes of a musical future for her.

Monsieur Wartel said he would expect her to-morrow, and it was with great urging we succeeded in being allowed a hearing at 4 o'clock.

We arrived at 3 o'clock. We were allowed to enter into an antechamber; we wished to go farther but a servant barred the way, and it was only when told that we were the ladies expected by Monsieur Wartel, that he allowed us to pass.

We were led into a small parlor next to that in which the master was giving a lesson.

"It is for 4 o'clock, Madame," said a young man, entering.

"Yes, Monsieur, but you will permit this young girl to listen."

"Undoubtedly, Madame."

Digitized by Google

During one hour, we listened to the singing of an English woman; a bad voice, and what a method! I had never heard such singing.

And I remembered with indignation Faccioti, Tosti, and Creschi.

The walls of the parlor in which we found ourselves were all covered with portraits of the greatest artists known, and with the most affectionate dedications beneath them.

At last it struck 4, and the Englishwoman went. I felt myself trembling and my strength going.

Wartel made me a sign which meant: Come in!

I did not understand.

"Come in, Mademoiselle, come in!"

I entered, followed by my two companions, whom I requested to return to the small parlor, for they would intimidate me, and, in reality, I was very much afraid.

Wartel is very old, but the accompanist is quite young.

"You read music?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"What do you sing?"

"Nothing, but I will sing a scale or a vocal exercise."

"Take, then, a vocal exercise, Monsieur Chose. What is your voice? Soprano?"

"No, Monsieur; contralto."

"We shall see."

Wartel did not arise from his arm-chair, but made a sign to commence. And I attacked the exercise, trembling at first, then enraged, and at last contented. For I did not take my eyes off the long, long, long face of the master. It was surprising.

"Ah, well," said he, "it is rather a mezzo-soprano that you have. It is a voice that can be raised."

"And what can you say of it, Monsieur?" inquired the ladies, entering.

"I say that there is a voice; but, you know, we must work hard. That voice is still young, and it will increase; in short,

Digitized by Google

it will follow the development of Mademoiselle. There is material, the organs are there, we must work."

"Then you believe it is worth while?"

"Yes, yes, we must work."

"But the voice is good?" asked Madame de M—.

"It will be a good voice," answered the man, in his tranquil tones, and with his indolent and reserved air; "but we must develop it, place it, work it, and it is a long business. Oh, yes, we must work!"

"I sang badly?" I asked, at last, "I was so frightened."

"Ah, Mademoiselle, you must grow accustomed to that! This fear must be overcome, it would be unwelcome on the stage."

But I was charmed with what the man had said; for what he said is a great deal for a poor girl who will bring him no profits.

Accustomed as I am to flattery, his grave and judicial tone seemed cold; but I understood at once that he was pleased.

He said: "We must work, there is some good," that is already enormous.

During this time the accompanist was measuring me—minutely examining my figure, arms, hands, and face.

I lowered my eyes and blushed, requesting the ladies to go.

Wartel was seated, I stood in front of his chair.

"You have taken lessons?"

"Never, Monsieur; that is, ten lessons only."

"Yes; in short, we must work. You may sing a romance."

"I know a Neapolitan song, but I have not the music."

"The 'Mignon' air," exclaimed my aunt, from the other room.

"Very well, sing the 'Mignon' air."

While I sang, the face of Wartel, which at first only expressed attention, showed a slight surprise, then astonishment, and, finally, he went so far as to move his head to the measure, smiling agreeably, and humming himself.

Digitized by Google

"Hem!" ejaculated the accompanist.

"Yes, yes," motioned the master, with his head.

I sang, much agitated.

"Remain in place, do not move, breathe!"

"Ah well, Monsieur," we said, all three together.

"Ah well, tis well. Make her do the—"(ah! I forget the word he said).

The accompanist made me do the—, never mind the name; he made me run over all my notes.

"As high as *si* natural," said he to the old man.

"Yes, it is a mezzo-soprano; besides, it is much more advantageous, much more advantageous for the stage."

I was still standing.

"Sit down, Mademoiselle," said the accompanist, examining me from head to foot.

I sat down on the edge of the sofa.

"In short, Mademoiselle," said the severe Wartel, "we must work; you will succeed."

He told me many other things concerning the theatre, singing, study, and all with his impassible air.

"How long would it require to form this voice?" asked Madame de M—.

"You understand, Madame, that it depends on the pupil; there are some who advance more quickly than others—those who have intelligence."

"This one has more than necessary."

"Ah, so much the better! In that case it is easier."

"But, in short, how much time?"

"To form her well, to finish her, three long years; yes, three long years of work, three long years!"

I was silent and meditated vengeance against the perfidious accompanist, with his air of saying: "She has a good figure and is pretty; I shall enjoy her lessons."

After a few more commonplaces, we arose. Wartel remained seated, extending his hand to me with kindness.

Digitized by Google

I was biting my lips.

"Listen," said I, at the door, "let us return and tell him the truth."

My aunt presented her card. We went in laughing heartily. I related my plot to the severe *maestro.* How astounded the accompanist looked! I shall never forget it. I was avenged.

"Had you spoken a little more," said Wartel, "I would have known you for a Russian."

"I knew that well, Monsieur; therefore, I did not speak."

The ladies explained to him my desire of knowing the truth from his illustrious lips.

"It is as I told you, ladies; there is voice, there must be talent."

"I will have it, Monsieur; I have; besides, you will see."

I was so glad that I consented to go on foot as far as the Grand Hotel.

"Never mind, my dear," said the countess, "I observed the face of the master from the next room, and when you sang 'Mignon,' he was very much astonished; is it not so, Madame? He hummed, and from a man like him! And for a little Italian whom he was there to judge with all possible severity!"

We dined together; I was pleased and I showed myself as I am, with all my originalities, and fancies; all my ambitions; all my hopes.

After dinner we remained a long time on the porch, enjoying the fresh air and the sight of the innumerable travelers who passed and repassed in the court-yard.

I must study with Wartel. And Rome?

We will consider it.

It is late, I will speak of that to-morrow.

Sunday, July 16th.—When I think of the happiness of Mademoiselle K—, to have become Princess of S—, all the bad instincts awaken in me—that is to say, envy!

That girl, so miserable at Nice, so common with her red cheeks and her large, shapeless nose!

Digitized by Google

She is beautiful, but it is a beauty that I would like in a waiting-maid, dressed in an odd costume—a woman to put on my shoes, to fan me.

And there she is queen, and queen in a moment of trouble, in a moment beyond the reach of the ambitious.

Truly, her place is marked in history.

And I!!!

Tuesday, July 18th.—To-day, I have seen some very extraordinary things. We went to the celebrated clairvoyant, Alexis.

He gives but few consultations other than consultations for the health.

We entered a room in semi-darkness, and as Madame de M— had said, "We are not here for health," the doctor went out, leaving us alone with the sleeping man.

A man that made me incredulous, and especially because of the absence of all exterior charlatanism.

"It does not concern health," said Madame de M—, placing my hand in that of Alexis.

"Ah!" said he, his eyes half closed and glassy like those of a corpse. "All the same, your little friend is very ill."

"Oh!" exclaimed I, frightened, and I was about to tell him not to speak of my illness, fearing to hear something horrible; but before I had time, he was giving the details of my disease, which is laryngitis, something chronic.

"Laryngitis, but I have very strong lungs, that is what saves me."

"The organ was superb," said Alexis, compassionately, "at present, it is worn out; you must be treated."

It had to be written, I do not remember all he said of bronchiæ of the larynx; for that reason I will return to the subject to-morrow.

"I come, Monsieur," said I to him, "to consult you about this person."

And I placed in his hand a sealed envelope containing a photograph of the Cardinal.

Digitized by Google

But before I tell of all the extraordinary things that happened here, let us agree together that there was nothing in my aspect to lead anyone to suppose that I thought of a Cardinal. I had not spoken a word about it to anyone. And, moreover, what probability was there that a young, elegant Russian should go to a clairvoyant to speak of the Pope, of the Cardinal, of the devil?

Alexis kept his hand to his forehead and thought; I was becoming impatient.

"I see him," said he, at last.

"Where is he?"

"In a large city in Italy; he is in a palace surrounded by many people; he is a young man—no, it is his expressive features that deceive me. He has gray hair; he is in uniform; he is past sixty years of age."

I hung with increasing eagerness upon words which fell from his lips. I was astounded.

"What uniform?" asked I. "It is singular. He is not a soldier."

"No, assuredly!"

"No, but then, what is that uniform?"

"Strange; not of our country. It is—"

"It is?"

"It is an ecclesiastical habit. Wait! He occupies a very high station; he rules others; he is a Bishop—no! he is a Cardinal!"

I gave a start, kicking my slippers to the other end of the room. Madame de M— was convulsed with laughter on seeing my excitement.

"A Cardinal?" I repeated.

"Yes."

"What is he thinking of?"

"He is thinking of a very grave matter; he is very much occupied."

The slowness of Alexis, and the difficulty he seemed to have in pronouncing the words, made me nervous.

Digitized by Google

"Go on, see whom he is with. What is he saying?"

"He is with two young men—officers—two young men whom he often sees, who belong to the palace."

I always saw at the Saturday receptions, two young officers in the suite of the Pope.

"He is speaking to them," continued Alexis, "he speaks to them in a strange tongue—Italian!"

"Italian!"

"Ah, but he is highly educated, this Cardinal, he speaks nearly all the European languages."

"Do you see him at this moment?"

"Yes, yes. Those who surround him are also ecclesiastics. One of them, very tall, thin, with glasses, approaches him and speaks low; he is near-sighted—he is obliged to bring the object very near to his eyes that he may see."

Ah, bother! it is the picture of the one whose name I always forget; but he is well known in Rome; he is the one who spoke of me at the dinner of the Villa Mattei.

"What is the Cardinal doing?" I asked. "What has he just done? Whom has he seen lately?"

"Yesterday—yesterday, he held a large reception at his home—people of the church—all! Yes, they discussed a grave subject, very grave, yesterday—Monday. He is much disturbed, for it is a question of—"

"Of what?"

"They talk, they work, they want—"

"What? See!"

"They want to make him—Pope!"

"Oh! Oh!"

The tone in which this was said, the astonishment of the clairvoyant, and the words of themselves gave me something like an electrical shock. I could scarcely stand. I removed my hat, deranging my curls, detaching the pins and throwing them in the middle of the room.

"Pope!" I exclaimed.

Digitized by Google

"Yes, Pope," repeated Alexis, "but there are great difficulties. He is not the one who has the most chance."

"But will he be Pope?"

"I can not read the future."

"But then, Monsieur, try, you can—go on!"

"No, no! I do not see the future! I do not see it!"

"But who is the Cardinal? What is his name? Can you not see by his surroundings—by what is said to him?"

"A— wait! Ah!" said he, "it is because this picture that I hold here is so devoid of vitality, and you are so agitated that you tire me horribly. Your nerves give shocks to mine. Be more calm."

"Yes, but you tell me things that make me jump. Let us see the name of this Cardinal?"

He pressed his head between his hands, and smelling the envelope (which was gray and double, and very thick), suddenly—"A—!"

I had nothing more to take off; I threw myself into an arm-chair.

"Does he think of me?"

"Little—and badly. He is against you. There is—I do not know what dissatisfaction—political motives."

"Political motives?"

"Yes."

"But will he be Pope?"

"I do not know. The French party will be destroyed, that is to say, the French papists have but little chance! Oh, but they have scarcely any—his party will unite with the party of Antonelli or the other Italian."

"Which of the two? Which will triumph?"

"I can not say at present; but many people are against A—; it is the other."

"And it will soon be decided?"

"We can not know. There is the Pope, they can not kill the Pope! The Pope must live!"

Digitized by Google

"And will Antonelli live long?"

Alexis shook his head.

"Is he, then, very ill?"

"Oh, yes!"

"What is the matter with him?"

"He has pains in the legs; he has the gout; and yesterday—no, day before yesterday, he had a terrible attack. He has a disease of the blood. I can not explain that to a lady."

"And it is useless."

"Do not agitate yourself," said he, "you fatigue me. Think slowly, I can not follow you."

His hand was trembling, and made everything within me tremble. I let go of it and became calm.

"Take that," said I, handing him Pietro's letter sealed in an envelope exactly similar to the other.

He took it, and, like the other, pressed it against his heart and brow.

"Ah! this one is younger," said he; "he is very young. This letter was written some time ago. It was written in Rome, and since then this person has removed. He is still in Italy—but not Rome. There is the sea. That man is in the country, in the open country. Oh, certainly! he has removed since yesterday, only twenty-four hours ago—no more. But that man is something to the Pope. I see him behind the Pope; he is allied to A—, there is a link of near relationship between them."

"But what is his character, what are his inclinations, his thoughts?"

"He is a strange character—retiring, *gloomy*, ambitious—He thinks of you constantly—but he thinks, above all, of attaining his design. He is ambitious."

"He loves me?"

"Very much; but his is a strange, unhappy nature. He is ambitious."

"Then he does not love me?"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, he loves you, but with him love and ambition go hand-in-hand. He has need of you."

"Describe him to me more fully as to morals."

"He is the contrary of you," said Alexis, smiling, "although fully as nervous."

"Does he see the Cardinal?"

"No, they do not agree; the Cardinal has long been against him from political motives."

I remembered what Pietro said to me: "My uncle would not be angry with the Caccia Club, and the *volontariat;* what is it to him, if it were not for politics?"

"But he is his near relative," continued Alexis. "The Cardinal is displeased with him."

"Have they not met lately?"

"Wait! You think of too many things, these are difficult questions, I confound this note with the *other!* They were in the same envelope!"

That was true, yesterday they were in the same envelope.

"See, Monsieur, try to see!"

"I see! They met two days ago, but they were not alone. I see him with a lady."

"Young?"

"Middle-aged, his mother."

"Of what did they speak?"

"Of nothing, clearly; they were embarrassed. They said a few vague words, almost nothing, about *this* marriage."

"What marriage?"

"With you."

"Who spoke of it?"

"*They.* Antonelli does not speak, he lets them speak. He was against this marriage from the very beginning. At present, he looks on it more favorably, and bears the idea better."

"But what are the young man's ideas?"

"Fixed ideas; he wants to marry you—but Antonelli does not

Digitized by Google

wish it. Since a very short time, however, he has been less hostile."

Madame de M— intimidated me greatly, but I continued bravely, although all my gay humor had fallen as low as possible.

"If that man thinks only of his aim, he does not think of me then!"

"Oh, as I have told you, *with him* you and his ambition are but one and the same thing."

"Then he loves me?"

"Oh, very much!"

"Since when?"

"You are too much agitated, you fatigue me, and you ask me questions too difficult. I do not see."

"Oh, yes; try!"

"I do not see—since a long time! no, I do not see that."

"What is he to A—?"

"A near relative."

"And A—, has he any designs on this young man?"

"Oh, yes! but they are divided through politics; nevertheless, things are smoother at present."

"You say that A— is against me?"

"Very much. He does not wish this marriage on account of religion. But he begins to soften—oh, very little—all that depends on politics. I say to you that A— and this young man were entirely divided some time ago. A— was squarely against him."

Well, what do you say to that, you who call all such things charlatanism? If it is charlatanism, it produces marvelous effects. I have transcribed it all minutely; I may have omitted something, but I have added nothing. Is it not most surprising? Is it not strange? My aunt pretended to be incredulous, for she was furious against the Cardinal; she began a tirade of abuse against Alexis without object or reason,

Digitized by Google

which provoked me terribly, knowing that she did not mean a word of it.

I was in high spirits yesterday, but to-day I am equally depressed.

Saturday, July 22d.—J— seeing that I do not arrive in Russia, has telegraphed to mamma, who writes that he and L— are my truly faithful friends. Yes, it is true. I think no more of Pietro, he is unworthy, and thank God, I do not love him!

Until the day before yesterday, I asked God every night to preserve him for me, and to make me triumph. I ask it no longer.

But God knows I want to avenge myself, although I do not dare ask for it. Vengeance is not a Christian sentiment, although noble; leave to the despicable the forgetfulness of injuries; besides, we forget them only when we can not do otherwise.

Sunday, July 23d.—Rome! Paris! The stage! singing! painting!

No, no! Russia before all! It is the foundation of all. Ha! since I pose as wise, let me act accordingly. Let not the *Will-o'-the-Wisp* of imagination lead me astray.

Russia before all! may God only help me!

I have written to mamma. I am now out of love, and up to the ears in business. Oh, if God will only help me, all will be well.

May the Virgin Mary pray for me!

Thursday, July 27th.—At last; yesterday we left Paris at 7 in the morning.

During the journey, I amused myself by giving Chocolate a lesson in history, and thanks to me, that brigand has some idea of the ancient Greeks, of Rome governed by kings, then as a republic, and finally as an empire, like France; and of the history of France from the time of the king who was beheaded. I explained to him the different parties that exist at present, and Chocolate is now well informed on the topics

Digitized by Google

of the present day; he even knows what a Deputy is. I related this to him, and afterward questioned him.

When I had finished, I asked him to what party he belonged, and the brigand answered:

"I am a Bonapartist!"

This is the recapitulation of what he has learned.

"The last king was Louis XVI., who was very good, but the Republicans, who are people who look for money and honors only, cut his head off, and that of his wife, Marie Antoinette also, and they then formed a republic. Afterward, France was very miserable, and there was born a man in Corsica who was Napoleon Bonaparte, and who had so much intelligence and courage that he was made Colonel, then General. Then, he conquered all the world, and the French loved him very much. But, having gone to Russia, he forgot to bring overcoats for his soldiers, and so they were very unhappy on account of the cold, and the Russians burned Moscow. Then, Napoleon, who was already Emperor, returned to France; but as he was unlucky, the French, who love only those who are lucky, loved him no longer, and all the other kings, to revenge themselves, ordered him to abdicate. Then he went to the Isle of Elba, afterward returned to Paris for 100 days, finally they drove him away. Then he saw an English vessel; he prayed them to save him; and when he got on board, they made him a prisoner and conducted him to St. Helena, where he died."

I assure you that Chocolate said it pretty nearly correctly.

At last; this morning we arrived at Berlin, and the impression made on me by this city, was singularly agreeable; the houses are very fine. I can not write a word to-day. It is enervating.

"Two sentiments are common to lofty or affectionate natures: First, extreme susceptibility to the opinion of others; and secondly, extreme bitterness when that opinion is unjust."

Digitized by Google

Friday, July 28th.—Berlin reminds me of Florence. But wait! It reminds me of Florence, because I am with my aunt, as in Florence, and I am leading the same life.

First of all, we visited the museum. Either through ignorance, or through prejudice, I did not expect anything like it in Prussia.

As usual, the statues attracted me most. It seems to me I possess one sense more than the rest of mankind—a faculty especially intended for the *comprehension* of statues.

In the large hall is a statue which I took for an Atalanta, because of a pair of sandals, which seemed to indicate that it was she, but the inscription bore the name of Psyche. No matter, Psyche or Atalanta, it is a remarkable figure of beauty and naturalness.

After seeing the Greek casts, we passed on. My eyes and intellect were already fatigued, and I recognized the Egyptian part only by its crowded and transitory lines, which recall the circles produced by the fall of an object into water.

Nothing is so terrible as to be with someone who is wearied by the objects which amuse you.

My aunt was hurried, tired, grumbling. It is true we had walked two hours.

What is very interesting, is the historical museum of miniatures, statues, and also of ancient engravings and miniature portraits. I adore these portraits; and, in looking at them, my fancy takes inconceivable flights, transports itself to all the epochs, invents characters, adventures, dramas. But enough!

Then the paintings.

To-day, painting has reached its highest point of development.

They commenced with harsh lines, vivid colors, which did not blend together, and we have reached a degree of softness which is not, however, devoid of confusion. There has not yet been, whatever we may say and write, there has not yet been a faithful copy of nature.

Digitized by Google

We must close our eyes on all that has been accomplished between the primitive style and the modern* style, and consider but those two.

Harshness, blinding colors, rudely traced lines—that is for the first. Softness, colors so blended with each other that they lose much of their identity, few lines—that is for the second.

We should now, so to speak, take with the end of the brush the too vivid colorings of ancient paintings, and transfer them to modern insipidity. Then we would have perfection.

There is again that style which is altogether new consisting of painting by splashes. It is a grave error, even if, with its aid, we obtain some effect.

In new paintings, positive objects, such as furniture and houses, or churches, are not understood. We reject precision in decorations, and produce a sort of depravity of lines. We stump too much (we may stump without using the stump), which has the effect that the figures contrast but little, and seem as lifeless as the objects that surround them, for these objects have not enough precision, and do not seem completely fixed and immovable.

Well, my child, since you understand so well, what is required to attain perfection? Be tranquil. I will work, and what is more, I will succeed.

I came home extremely tired, after having purchased thirty-two English volumes partly translated from the first German writers.

"Already a library here!" cried my aunt, with fright. The more I read, the more I want to read; and the more I learn, the more I have to learn.

I do not say this to imitate a certain wise man of antiquity. I feel what I say.

Here I am in "Faust." I am seated before an antique German bureau—books, manuscripts, rolls of paper.

Where is the devil? Where is Marguerite? Alas! the devil is always with me—my foolish vanity, there is the evil

* By modern, I mean Raphael, Titian, and the other great masters.

Digitized by Google

spirit. Oh, unjustified ambition! Useless impulse toward an unknown aim!

I detest the golden mean; I must have either a life full of excitement, or absolute calm.

I do not know why, but I do not love A— at all. Not only do I not love him, I do not even think of him, and *all that* seems a dream.

But Rome attracts me; I feel that there only can I study. Rome, the noise and the silence, the dissipation and the reveries, the light and the shadow! But wait! the light and the shadow? It is clear that where there is light there is a shadow, and *vice versa*. No! I ridicule myself, that is positive! I want to go to Rome, the only spot in the world that accords with my disposition, the only one I love for itself.

The museum at Berlin is beautiful and rich, but does Berlin owe it to Germany? No; to Greece, to Egypt, to Rome!

After the contemplation of all this antiquity, I entered the carriage with the most profound disgust for our arts, our architectures, and our fashions.

If you took the trouble to analyze your sentiments, when leaving such places, you would find that you think as I do. Why always insist upon thinking as others do?

While not admiring the dryness and the materialism of Germans, we must acknowledge that they possess many good qualities; they are very polite, very obliging.

And what pleases me above all, is the respect they have for princes and their history. That is because they are undefiled by the infection which we call the republic.

Nothing is so fine as an ideal republic; but the republic is like the ermine—the least spot kills it. And find me a republic without stain!

No, such a life is impossible, it is a frightful country! Beautiful houses, wide streets, but—nothing for the intellect

Digitized by Google

or imagination! The smallest city in Italy is worth ten Berlins.

My aunt asks me how many pages I have written. "One hundred pages, I believe," she says.

In truth, I look as if I were writing; but no, I think, I dream, I read, then I write two words, and it is thus all day.

It is singular how well I understand the benefits of the republic, since I am a Bonapartist.

No, truly the republic is the only happy form of government; only, in France it is impossible. Besides, the French Republic is built on mire and blood. Well, let us not think of the republic. I have thought of it for nearly a week; for, in short, let us see, is France more unhappy since she has been a republic? No, on the contrary. Well, then?

And the abuses? They are found everywhere.

What is needed, is a good liberal constitution, and a man at the head who will govern but little and who will be like a beautiful sign, which does not increase the value of the store, but inspires confidence and is agreeable to the eye. Now, a President can not be that.

But enough for to-night; another time, when I know more, I will say more about it.

Sunday, July 30th.—Nothing is so sad as Berlin. The city bears the seal of simplicity; of homely, ungainly simplicity. All those innumerable monuments which encumber the bridges, the streets, and gardens are badly placed and look stupid. Berlin is like a mechanical clock, where, at certain moments, the soldiers come out of their barracks, the boatmen row, the ladies in hoods pass, holding by the hand wretched children.

On the eve of my return to Russia, of being without my aunt, without mamma, I weaken and I am afraid. The grief I cause my aunt, pains me.

The lawsuit, the uncertainty, all that . . . and then, and then, I do not know, but I fear that I can change nothing!

Digitized by Google

The idea of recommencing after my return the same life as formerly, this time without hope of change, without having that "Russia," which consoled me for everything and gave me strength! My God, have pity on me, see the state of my soul and be kind!

In two hours we leave Berlin; to-morrow, I shall be in Russia. Well, no, I do not weaken; I am strong. Only, if I go in vain? But that is wrong; we should not despair in advance.

Ah, if some one could understand what I feel!

Monday, July 31st.—Yesterday, my aunt, myself, Chocolate, and Amalia arrived at the station, at 10 o'clock. I was quite overcome, but the sight of a coupé, as large and comfortable as a small room, reanimated me a great deal, more so, as the car was lighted by gas, and we were sure of being alone. The compartment having but three places, the servants placed themselves beside me. On the eve of a separation, I should have wished to converse with my aunt; but I am not demonstrative, when I feel seriously tender, and my aunt was silent, fearing to displease me or to make me impatient by speaking. So that, willing or unwilling, I remained absorbed in "*Un Mariage dans le Monde*," by Octave Feuillet.

A salutary work, by my faith! which gave me the most profound horror of adultery and all those obscenities.

Over these wise reflections, I went to sleep to awaken only three hours from the frontier, at Eydtkühnen, where we arrived about 4 o'clock.

The country is flat, the trees bushy and green; but the leaves, although fresh and vigorous, gave me a certain feeling of sadness after the rich and abundant pastures of the South.

We were conducted to a tavern called Hôtel de Russie, and we installed ourselves in two small rooms with whitewashed ceilings, bare floors, and wooden furniture, equally plain and simple.

Digitized by Google

Thanks to necessity, I immediately improvised a bath and a toilet, and, after having partaken of eggs and milk, served by a fresh and fat German woman, here I am writing.

I am not without charms, in this poor little room, in a white *peignoir*, with my beautiful arms bare, and my golden hair.

I have just looked out of the window. The infinite is tiresome to the sight—the complete absence of hills, and this plain, so flat, remind me of the summit of a mountain which dominates the entire world.

Chocolate is foolishly vain.

"You are my courier," said I to him, "you should speak several languages."

The little fellow answered me that he spoke French, Italian, Nicene, and a little Russian, and that he would speak German if I would only teach him.

He came to me in tears, followed by peals of laughter from Amalia, complaining that the hotelkeeper had assigned him a bed in a room already occupied by a Jew.

I put on a serious look, seeming to think it only natural that he should sleep with a Jew; but poor Chocolate wept so, that I began to laugh, and, to console him, made him read a few pages of a History of the World, purchased especially for him.

This negro boy amuses me; he is a living toy. I give him lessons, I drill him in his duties, I make him tell his whims; in a word, he is my dog and my doll. Decidedly, life at Eydtkühnen charms me. I give myself up to instructing young Chocolate, who is making excellent progress, in morals and in philosophy.

This evening, I made him recite his sacred history, and when he reached the place where Jesus is betrayed by Judas, he related to me in a very touching manner, how the said Judas sold our Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and pointed him out to the guards with a kiss.

"Chocolate, my friend," said I, "would you sell me to my enemies for 30 francs?"

Digitized by Google

"No," said Chocolate, shaking his head.

"For 60?"

"No."

"For 120?"

"No."

"Then for 1,000 francs?" asked I, again.

"No, no," replied Chocolate, scratching the edge of the table with his monkey fingers, his eyes lowered, and his feet agitated.

"Look here, Chocolate, if you were offered 10,000?" persisted I, affectionately.

"No."

"Good boy! but if you were offered 100,000 francs?" asked I, again, to relieve my conscience.

"No," said Chocolate, and his voice changed to a murmur, "it would need to be more."

"What did you say?"

"That I should want more."

"Then, excellent heart, say how much, say it then, faithful scoundrel! Let us see, 2,000,000, 3,000,000, 4,000,000?"

"Five or six!"

"But wretch!" cried I, "Is it not the same thing to sell for 30 francs or for 6,000,000?"

"Oh, no, for if I had as much money as that, no one could make me do anything."

In contempt of all morality I fell on the sofa, convulsed with laughter, while Chocolate, satisfied with himself, retired to the next room.

But do you know who prepared my dinner? Amalia.

She roasted two small fowls; without that, I should have died of hunger, and as to thirst—we were served a *Chateau-Larose* which was not fit to drink.

No, truly, Eydtkühnen is funny! We shall see what Russia will be.

Tuesday, August 1st.—I feel like writing a romance of chiv-

Digitized by Google

alry, for that one which I have commenced is thrown at the bottom of the white box.

I am with my aunt in this happy tavern of Eydtkühnen, awaiting my much-honored uncle.

About half-past 8, tired of being shut up, I went to see the arrival of the train myself, and being told that I was a few minutes ahead, I went for a walk, accompanied by Amalia.

Eydtkühnen possesses a charming walk, well paved and shaded, lined on the right by pretty, neat, little houses; there are also two species of cafés and a sort of restaurant. The whistle of the locomotive surprised me in the middle of this walk, and, notwithstanding my small feet and high heels, I began running through kitchen gardens, piles of stones, rails, to arrive in time—and in vain! What thinks my good uncle?

Wednesday, August 2d.—While awaiting other sorrows, behold my hair is falling out. Those who have never experienced it can never understand what grief it is to see your hair fall out.

Uncle Etienne telegraphs from Konotop that he will not start till to-day. Twenty-four hours more of Eydtkühnen, if you please! A gray sky, a cold wind, a few Jews in the street; from time to time, the noise of a cart; worries of all sorts in plenty.

This evening my aunt tried to make me speak of Rome. For a long time, I had not wept—not from love—no, but it is the humiliation at the recollection of our life at Nice that made me weep to-night.

Thursday, August 3d.—Friday, August 4th (July 23d, Russian Style).—Yesterday, at 3 o'clock, I went to see the train come in, and, fortunately, my uncle was there.

He could remain but a quarter of an hour, because, at the Russian frontier at Wirballen, he had, with great difficulty, obtained permission to come here without a passport; he had given his word of honor to a custom officer to return by the next train.

Digitized by Google

Chocolate ran in search of my aunt; there were but a few minutes left. When she arrived, we had time to say but two words. My aunt, in her uneasiness for me, on entering the tavern, imagined she had remarked a strange look in uncle, and by all sorts of half-spoken words, discouraged me so that I also became uneasy. Finally, at midnight, I entered the carriage; my aunt was weeping. I kept my eyes raised and fixed that they might not overflow. The conductor gave the signal, and for the first time in my life I found myself alone!

I commenced to weep aloud, but if you think I did not profit by it! I studied from nature how to weep.

"Enough, my child," said I, arising. It was time. I was in Russia. In descending I was received in the arms of my uncle, of two *gendarmes*, and of two custom officers. They treated me like a princess, they did not even examine my luggage. The station is large, the functionaries are elegant and excessively polite. I thought myself in an ideal country—everything is so well done. A simple *gendarme* here, is better than an officer in France.

And here, let me make a remark in justification of our poor Emperor, whom we accuse of having strange eyes. All those who wear caps (and there are quite a number in Wirballen) have eyes like the Emperor. I do not know whether it depends on the caps, which fall over the eyes, or whether it is imitation. As to imitation, it is well known that in France all the soldiers resembled Napoleon.

I was given a compartment to myself, and after speaking of business and other things with uncle, I went to sleep, enraged about my dispatch to A—.

At the refreshment-rooms in the stations, which are neatly kept, I had very good things to eat.

My compatriots awake in me no particular emotion, no such ecstasy as I have experienced in returning to countries I have already seen; but I feel much sympathy for them, and there comes to me a strong sentiment of contentment.

Digitized by Google

And then, everything is so comfortable, everybody is so polite; there is in the countenance of each Russian so much cordiality, so much kindness, so much frankness, that it rejoices the heart.

Uncle came to awaken me at 10 o'clock this morning.

They burn wood on the locomotives, which spares us from the dirt of coal. I awoke quite clean, and passed the day conversing, sleeping, and looking through the window at our beautiful flat Russia; but this country reminds one of Rome.

At half-past 9 it was still day-light. We had passed Gatchina, the ancient residence of Paul I., so persecuted during the life of his haughty mother, and, at last, here we were at Tzarskoë-Selo, and in twenty-five minutes we reached St. Petersburg.

I descended at the Hôtel Demouth, accompanied by an uncle, a maid, a negro, followed by a lot of luggage, and 50 roubles in my pocket. What do you say to that?

While I was at supper in my parlor, which was large enough, but without carpet and with an unpainted ceiling, uncle entered.

"Do you know who is here—who is at my house?" asked he.

"No. Who?"

"Guess, princess."

"I do not know!"

"Paul Issayevitch. May he come in?"

"Yes; let him come in!"

Issayevitch is in St. Petersburg with the Governor-General of Wilna, M. Albedinsky, who is married to a former favorite of the Emperor's.

He received my dispatch from Eydtkühnen at the moment of his departure. Being on duty, he had charged his friend, Count Mouravieff, to come and meet me. But this count was disturbed in vain, as we passed Wilna at 3 in the morning, and I was fast asleep.

Who will deny my kindness, after I have told that I was gay this evening, because I felt Issayevitch was glad to see me? Is it egoism?

Digitized by Google

I was singularly rejoiced over the pleasure that I caused another. In short, here is an escort to attend me at St. Petersburg. I am at St. Petersburg!

But, so far, I have seen only *drochki*. The *drochki* is a one-place vehicle with eight springs (like Binder's large carriages) and one horse. I have seen the Cathedral of Kasan, with its colonnade after the style of St. Peter's at Rome, and many "drinking houses."

On all sides, I hear the praises of the Princess Marguerite—so simple, so kind! they say. Simple—no one appreciates simplicity in a woman who is not a princess; be simple, and kind, and amiable, and be not queen, and inferiors will take liberties, whilst your equals will say, good little soul! and will prefer in everything women who are neither simple nor good.

Ah! if I were queen! It is I who would be adored; it is I who would be popular!

The Italian princess, her husband, and her suite, have not yet left Russia—they are at present visiting Kieff. "The mother of all Russian cities," as the great Prince St. Woldemar said, after having become a Christian, and having baptized half of Russia in the Dnieper.

Kieff is the richest city in the world in churches, convents, monks, and relics; and as to the precious stones possessed by these convents, their value is fabulous. There are cellars which are as full of them as in the tales of a Thousand-and-One-Nights.

I saw Kieff eight years ago, and I still remember those subterranean corridors filled with relics, which encircle the city, which pass under all the streets and connect the convents with each other, thus giving kilometres of corridors lined to the right and left with tombs of saints. Oh, God! forgive the wicked thought, but it is not possible that there were so many saints as that!

Sunday, August 6th.—Instead of visiting the churches I slept, and Nina took me to breakfast at her home. Her parrot

Digitized by Google

talked, her girls screamed, I sang; we could have believed ourselves at Nice. A coupé with two places gave shelter to the three graces who, in a pouring rain, went to see the Cathedral of Issakië celebrated for its columns of malachite, and of lapis lazuli. These columns are extremely rich, but in bad taste, for the green of the malachite, and the blue of the lapis lazuli, destroy each other. The mosaics and the paintings are ideal—real figures of saints, of the Virgin, and of angels. The whole church is of marble; the four *façades*, with their granite columns, are beautiful, but they are not in harmony with the golden byzantine dome. And in general, we receive a certain painful impression of the whole exterior, for the dome is too important, and crushes the four small domes surmounting the *façades*, which would otherwise be so beautiful.

The profusion of gold and ornaments in the interior produces the most happy effect; the variety is harmonious and in the best taste, excepting the two columns of lapis lazuli, which would be sumptuous anywhere else.

A marriage of the lower class was being celebrated. The bride and groom were homely, and we did not look at them long.

I love the Russian people—good, brave, loyal, simple. These men and women stop before every church and chapel, before every niche with images, and cross themselves in the middle of the street, as if they were at home.

After seeing the Cathedral of Issakië, we went to that of Kasan. Again a marriage, and a charming bride! This cathedral is built in imitation of St. Peter's at Rome, but the colonnade seems out of place; it does not seem to belong to the building; it is not extensive enough, so that the half-circle is not formed, and all this gives a disadvantageous and unfinished appearance to the whole church.

Further on, on the Newsky, is the statue of Catherine the Great.

Digitized by Google

And in front of the Senate, near the winter palace, which is, by the way, an immense barracks, is the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, one hand pointing to the Senate, the other to the Neva. The people give this double indication a peculiar interpretation. The Czar, they say, points to the Senate with one hand and to the river with the other, meaning that it were better to drown one's self in the Neva than to plead at the Senate.

The statue of Nicholas is remarkable, in that it is not supported by the two legs and the tail of the horse, three supports, but only by the legs; this wonder gave me a lugubrious reflection: The commune will have less to do, the support of the tail being wanting.

I dined alone with my graces, Uncle Etienne and Paul for spectators. They speak of themselves seriously as my court; they tease me horribly. I care to see only Giro and Marie.

It is raining, and I am hoarse. I am writing to mamma: "St. Petersburg is a dirty place! The pavements are atrocious for a Capital; we are unmercifully jolted; the winter palace is a barracks, so is the grand theatre; the cathedrals are rich, but odd and badly constructed."

And if you add to this the climate, you will have the charm complete.

I tried to feel some emotion when looking at the portrait of Pietro A—, but he does not seem handsome enough for me to forget that he is a villain, a creature I can but scorn.

I am angry with him no longer, for I despise him completely, not on account of personal insult, but for his manner of living, for his weakness. Wait, I will define the sentiment which I have just named. The weakness which urges us toward what is good, to tender sentiments, to the forgiveness of injuries, may be called by that name. But the weakness which urges us to evil and wickedness is called cowardice.

I thought I would feel more the absence of my family, still

Digitized by Google

I am not contented, but that is caused more by the presence of disagreeable and common people (my poor uncle, in spite of his good looks) than the absence of those I love.

Monday, August 7th (July 26th), 1876.—"We have nothing original but the Middle Ages," I have said in the last book of my journal.

We? Who? The Christians. In reality, has the world been regenerated, or is it that under other conditions the same customs flow as they have flowed since the beginning of the world, tending always toward amelioration?

The lives of nations resemble streams that flow slowly, at times over rocks, at times over sand, at times between two mountains, at times under the ground, at times through an ocean with which they mingle, but out of which they come the same, changing name and even *direction*, but only to pursue always the *same thing*, that which is fixed and unknown.

By whom?

God, or nature? If God is nature, we are but imbeciles, for nature has nothing to do with men and their interests.

In classes of philosophy, we prove very clearly the existence of a Supreme Being, by taking as an example the mechanism of the universe; do we prove the existence of a God such as we imagine Him to be?

The occupations of nature are to move the planets and attend to the physical wants of our world. But our intellect? but our soul? We must admit a God other than the vague idea of a personification of universal mechanism.

We must? Why?

At this point I was interrupted, and I have lost the thread for the present.

I went to the post to get my photographs and a dispatch from my father. He telegraphs to Berlin that my arrival will be for him "a true happiness."

Having found Giro in bed, I remained some time with her; a chance word started us to speak of Rome, and I related to

Digitized by Google

her, in a lively manner, my adventures in that city. I interrupted myself only to laugh. Giro and Marie rolled in their bed in merriment. An incomparable trio! I laugh thus only with my graces.

Then by a reaction, sudden if not natural, I fell back into melancholy on my return.

I returned at midnight with uncle and Nina.

St. Petersburg improves at night. I know of nothing more magnificent than the Neva, ornamented by lanterns contrasting with the moon and the deep-blue, almost gray, sky. The defects of houses, of pavements, of bridges, melt away in the obliging shadows of night. The surface of the wharves appears in all its majesty. The peak of the Admiralty is lost in the sky, and in an azure mist encircled with light, we see the cupola and the graceful form of the Cathedral of Issakië, which seems a floating shadow descended from the sky.

I would like to be here in winter.

Wednesday, August 9th (*July 28th*), 1876.—I am penniless. Agreeable situation! Uncle Etienne is an excellent man, but he always hurts my feelings. This morning I was very angry; but half an hour afterward, I was laughing as if nothing had happened, at the home of the Sapogenikoffs.

Doctor Tchernicheff was there. I would have liked to ask him for a remedy for my hoarseness; but I had no money, and that gentleman does nothing for nothing. Very delicate position, I assure you. But I do not weep in advance. Misfortune is annoying enough when it comes, without weeping beforehand.

At 4 o'clock, Nina and the three graces left in the carriage for the Peterhoff station. All three dressed in white, under long dusters.

The train was leaving and we got on without tickets; but, provided with the escort of four officers of the guard, who were, no doubt, tempted by my white feather and by the red heels of my graces. Then, here we are, myself and Giro, like noble

Digitized by Google

military horses at the sound of music, the ear on the watch, the eye brilliant, and in joyous humor.

On my return, I found a supper, my Uncle Etienne, and money sent to me by Uncle Alexander. I ate the supper, dismissed my uncle, and hid the money.

And then, strange thing, I felt a great void, a sort of sadness; I looked at myself in the mirror, my eyes were as on the last night at Rome. The recollection came back into my heart and into my head.

That night he prayed me to remain another day. I closed my eyes, and believed myself to be *down below.*

"I shall remain," I murmured, as if he were there, "I shall remain for my love, for my betrothed, for my beloved! I love you, I wish to love you, you do not deserve it, it does not matter, it pleases me to love you."

Suddenly, taking a few steps in the room, I began to weep before the mirror—tears in small quantity, quite enhance my beauty.

Having excited myself through caprice, I calmed myself through fatigue, and began to write, laughing softly at myself.

Thus, often, I invent a hero, a romance, a drama, and I laugh and weep over my invention as if it were reality.

I am enchanted with St. Petersburg, but there is no sleep here; it is already day-light, the nights are so short.

Thursday, August 10th (*July 29th*), 1876.—This night is a memorable night. I cease definitely to consider the Duke of H— as my beloved shadow. I saw at Bergamasco's, a portrait of the Grand Duke Vladimir. I could not tear myself from this portrait; beauty, more perfect and more agreeable, we can not imagine. Giro and I became enraptured, and we ended by kissing the portrait on the lips. Have you ever remarked the pleasure obtained by kissing a portrait?

We did as all the young ladies from the Institute would do. It is the fashion to adore the Emperor and the Grand Dukes;

Digitized by Google

besides, they are all so perfectly handsome that there is nothing astonishing in that, but I carried away from this pasteboard kiss a strange melancholy and enough to dream over for an hour. I adored the duke when I might have adored a Prince Imperial of Russia; it is stupid, but we can not control these things, and then, in the beginning, I considered H— as my equal, as a man for me. I have forgotten him. Who will be my idol? No one. I will look for fame and a *man*.

My overburdened heart will overflow, as it has overflowed at random, in the roadway, in the dust; but without emptying this heart, constantly refilled by generous springs which will never be exhausted in its depths.

Where did you read that, Mademoiselle? In my intellect, silly readers.

I am then free, I adore no one, but I search the one I shall adore. This must be very soon; life without love is a bottle without wine. But still, the wine must be good.

The lamp of my imagination is lighted, shall *I* be more happy than the coarse fool called Diogenes?

Saturday, August 12th (*July 31st*).—Everything was ready, Issayevitch had said good-bye, the Sapogenikoffs were with me at the station, when—Oh, bother!—we were short of money, we had made wrong calculations. I was obliged to wait at Nina's until 7 o'clock at night, that uncle might procure money for me in the city.

At 7 o'clock I started, considerably humiliated by the adventure, but agreeably agitated at the moment of departure, by the appearance of a dozen officers of the guard followed by six soldiers in white, carrying banners. These brilliant youths had just attended two officers who, with the authorization of the government, were leaving for Servia. Servia is causing a real desertion. Since the Emperor will not declare war, all Russia subscribes money, and is aroused in the cause of the Servians. Nothing else is talked about. The heroic deaths of a colonel and several Russian officers are spoken of

Digitized by Google

in terms of enthusiasm. We can but be moved to pity for our brothers who are tranquilly left to be strangled and hacked to pieces by those atrocious Turkish savages; by that nation without genius, without civilization, without morals, without glory.

And to think I cán not subscribe a sou!

One hour before arriving, I placed my book aside that I might see Moscow well, our true capital, the city truly Russian. St. Petersburg is a German copy—as copied by Russians, it is, nevertheless, worth more than Germany.

But here, everything is Russian—architecture, cars, houses, the peasants, who by the roadside look at the passing train, the small wooden bridge thrown across a sort of river, the mud in the road—all is Russian, all is cordial, simple, religious, loyal.

The churches, with their cupolas in the form and color of a green fig, produce an agreeable impression when approaching the city. The coxcomb who took my bundles, took off his cap and bowed to me as if we were friends, with a wide smile, full of respect. We are far from either French impudence or German gravity—so stupid and clumsy!

I did not cease looking through the window of the carriage, which was provided for us to reach the hotel.

It is cool, but not that damp and unhealthy coolness that belongs to St. Petersburg. The city—the largest in Europe in area—is ancient; the streets are paved with big, irregular stones; they are themselves irregular. We go up and down, we turn at every instant amid houses of few stories; very often one story only, but high and with large windows. The luxury of space is a thing so common here that no attention is paid to it, and the heaping up of one story above the other is unknown.

The "Bazar-Slave" is a hotel like the Grand Hotel in Paris. We even find the same circular grand restaurant. But, although perhaps not so luxurious as the Grand Hotel, the "Bazar-Slave"

Digitized by Google

is infinitely cleaner and infinitely cheaper, and especially in comparison to the Hôtel Demouth.

The porters of the houses are dressed in a black vest, pantaloons inside their boots, which come up to their knees, and a cap of astrakhan.

In general, we see many national costumes. Each province wears its own peculiar dress, and we do not see those odious German jackets, and the German signs are more scarce; but there are some—I say it with regret—there are some.

I was much troubled in choosing a cab, the drivers urged us with so much eagerness that we feared, in giving the preference to one, to mortally hurt the feelings of the others. At last we entered a sort of phaeton, excessively narrow, and then commenced a course of obstacles. The stones of the pavement, the rails of tram-ways, the passing people, the carriages. We went through all this as fast as the wind, jolted at every instant, and often almost thrown out of the carriage. Uncle was groaning with uneasiness and I was laughing at him, at myself, at our wild running, at the wind, which was blowing my hair and burning my cheeks. I laughed at everything; and at every church, every chapel, at every niche with images, I crossed myself devoutly, in imitation of the good people of the street. What surprised me disagreeably, were the barefooted women.

I went into the passage of Solodornikoff to buy a white *ruche*. I walked up and down in there, my head high, my hands hanging by my side, and my mouth smiling as if at home. I want to leave to-morrow; I can not buy anything, I have but just enough to reach Uncle Etienne's home.

The arch of triumph of Catherine II. is painted red, with green columns and yellow ornaments. In spite of the extravagance of colors, you can not believe how pretty it is; besides, it is in harmony with the roofs of the houses and of the churches, which are nearly all covered with sheets of green or

Digitized by Google

dark-red iron. This artlessness of exterior ornaments fills you with a sense of comfort, in making you feel the good simplicity of the Russian people; and the Nihilists are already at work undermining that. Mephistopheles perverts Marguerite. The propaganda does its infamous work, and the day when these good people—excited, deceived—will arise. . . it will be terrible; for, if in time of peace and calm they are meek and simple as a lamb, in revolution they will be angry unto ferocity, cruel unto frenzy.

But love for the Emperor is still great, thank God, and so is respect for religion. There is something touching in the devotion and loyalty of the people.

On the square of the Grand Theatre are seen entire flocks of gray pigeons. They are not at all frightened by carriages, and the wheels pass within two finger-widths of a pigeon without troubling him. As you are aware, Russians do not eat these birds, because it is under the form of a dove that the Holy Ghost is represented.

I do not want to visit anything this time. Moscow requires a week's time. In returning, with money, I will see all the historical curiosities. I caught but a glimpse of the Kremlin; for, at the moment it was pointed out, my attention was absorbed by a hackney coach, the exterior of which was painted in imitation of malachite.

Among the names displayed in the vestibule of the hotel, I read that of the Princess Souwaroff. I immediately sent Chocolate to ask if she would receive me. Chocolate returned and told me Madame la Princesse would be out until 7 o'clock.

Uncle Etienne is sleeping, and I am writing in the parlor.

On the back of the breakfast bill-of-fare is printed a passionate appeal to the people, and to the Russian clergy, from the Slavonic Committee of Moscow. This heart-rending proclamation was given to me this morning. I shall keep it.

The appeal has stirred my soul. Why do they not go and ask the Emperor for war? If all the nation, arising, threw

Digitized by Google

themselves at the knees of the Emperor, beseeching him to go to the rescue of their brothers, abandoned to the fury of savages, who would dare say no?

But the Nihilists, there is the misfortune; the troops once removed, they would rouse all the galley-slaves and rogues and establish a small commune *to begin with.*

Imagine to be there, in the heart of your country, so beautiful in itself, and so full of hopes for the future, and to feel yourself threatened by all these horrors! I would like to take it in my arms and carry it far away, like a child whose eyes, mouth, and ears we close that he may not hear the blasphemies nor see the obscenities.

My God! how could I have kissed his face? I, the first? Fool, execrable creature! Ah! that is what makes me weep and shudder with rage! *Turpis, execrabilis!*

He believed it was very simple for me, that it was not the first time, that it was a formed habit! Vatican and Kremlin! I suffocate with rage, and shame!

A cup of broth, a hot *calatch*, and some fresh caviar, there is an incomparable commencement of a dinner. The *calatch* is a species of bread, but one must go to Moscow to have an idea of it, and the *calatch* of Moscow is almost as celebrated as the Kremlin. With one portion of *assetrine*, I was given two immense slices, which in another country would be divided into four (it is needless to say that I did not eat it all). Furthermore, I had a veal cutlet fifty centimetres square, surrounded with small peas and potatoes, an entire chicken, and a saucer filled with caviar, representing "a half portion."

Uncle Etienne laughed and told the servants that in Italy there would be enough for four. The servant, tall and thin as Gianetto Doria, immovable as an Englishman, answered without budging, and without changing expression, that this was the reason of the small stature and thinness of Italians; but the Russians, he added, like to eat plenty, that is why

Digitized by Google

they are strong. On this, the immovable brute deigned to smile, and went out like a wooden puppet.

The quantity is not the only advantage of the eatables here, for they are of the most exquisite quality. When we eat well, we are in good humor; when we are in good humor, we regard happiness with more joy, and misfortune with more philosophy, and we feel agreeably disposed toward our neighbor. Exaggerated greediness is a monstrosity in a woman, but a little greediness is as necessary as intellect, as dress, without taking into account that good and simple food maintains the health, and consequently youth, the freshness of the skin, and the roundness of the form. Witness my body. Marie Sapogenikoff says, with reason, that, for such a body, a much more beautiful face is required, and bear in mind that I am far from being homely. When I think of what I shall be when I am twenty, I am filled with delight. At thirteen I was too fat, and I was taken for sixteen. Now I am slender, well-formed, and remarkably curved, perhaps too much so. I compare myself to all the statues, and I find nothing so well curved, or so large across the hips as I. Is it a defect? But the shoulders require to have a little more roundness—But what was I saying? Oh, yes, that I asked for tea. I was served a *samovar*, twenty-four pieces of sugar, and cream enough for five cups of tea. Both exquisite. I always liked tea, even when bad. I drank five cups (small) with cream, and three without cream, like a true Russian.

True Russians and their two capitals are entirely new for me.

Before going to foreign countries, all I knew of Russia was Little Russia and the Crimea.

The few Russian peasants who were in the habit of coming to Nice as strolling merchants, seemed almost like strangers, and we ridiculed their costumes and their language.

I may say all I please, it is not the less true that my lips are polluted since that profaning kiss.

Digitized by Google

Wise people, cynical women, I forgive you that smile of scorn for my affected candor! But, really, I think that I lower myself by even admitting the possibility of my being disbelieved. Must I again swear? Ah, no! it seems to me that I do enough in telling my least thoughts, especially when I am not obliged to do so. I do not make a merit of it, for my journal is my life, and in the midst of all these pleasures, I think: How much I shall have to relate to-night! As if it were an obligation!

Monday, August 14th (*August 2d*).—Yesterday, at 1 o'clock, we left Moscow, which was full of commotion and decked with flags in honor of the arrival of the Kings of Greece and Denmark.

During all the journey, Uncle Etienne positively provoked me.

Imagine the perusal of a study on Cleopatra and Mark Antony interrupted every instant by such phrases as these: Will you eat? You are perhaps cold? Here are roast chicken and cucumbers? Perhaps a pear? Do you wish the window closed? What will you eat on your arrival? I telegraphed to have your bath prepared, our queen; I ordered one of marble to be made, and all the house has been prepared to receive Your Majesty.

Incontestably kind but inexcusably tiresome.

Some well appearing gentlemen were courting Amalia as if she were a lady. Chocolate astonished me by his emancipated spirit, and his cat-like nature, ungrateful and crafty.

At the Grousskoë station we were received by two carriages, six peasant servants, and my naughty brother, tall and stout, but handsome as a Roman statue, with comparatively small feet. An hour and a half of driving to Chpatowka, during which I got a glimpse of the animosity which exists between my father and the Babanines. I held my head high, and kept in check my brother who is, moreover, enchanted to see me.

I do not wish to take either part, I have need of my father.

Digitized by Google

"Gritzko" (a Russian country nickname for Gregoire) "remained here two weeks, awaiting you," said Paul to me, "we thought you would never come."

"And is he gone?"

"No, I left him at Poltava; he wishes very much to see you. 'You understand,' said he to me, 'I have known her since she was a little speck of a girl.'"

"Then he thinks himself a man and believes me a little girl still?"

"Yes."

"That is what I am. How is he?"

"He still speaks French; he goes into the best society of St. Petersburg; he is said to be avaricious, but he is only sensible and as he should be. We wished, he and I, to receive you with a band of music at Poltava; but papa said that was due to queens only."

I notice that my father fears to appear pompous and vain. I shall reassure him very quickly. I adore all those follies that he is extremely fond of.

Eighteen *versts* of plowed fields, and at last the village composed of low and poor huts! All the peasants uncovered their heads in advance, on perceiving the carriage. Those good faces, patient and respectful, affected me. I smiled on them, and, all astonished, they replied with smiles to my friendly little bows.

The house has but one story, small, with a large and ill-kept garden. The peasant girls are well formed, beautiful, and piquant in their costumes that set off their figures and leave their legs naked to the knee.

Marie, my aunt, received us on the porch. I took a bath, and we then dined. I have had several skirmishes with Paul. He tried to exasperate me, perhaps unwillingly, in obedience to orders given him by his father. I haughtily put him back in his place, and it was he who was humiliated, where he wished to humiliate me. I read him thoroughly. Incredulity as to

Digitized by Google

my success, home thrusts relative to our position in society. I am called nothing but "queen;" my father wishes to dethrone me; I will make him bend. I know him, for I am his own daughter in many ways.

Tuesday, August 15th (*August 3d*).—The house is gay and bright as possible, flowers everywhere; the parrot talks, the canaries sing, the servants run about. About 11 o'clock the sound of bells announced a neighbor. It was M. Hamaley. Would we not say an Englishman? Well, not at all, an ancient noble family of Lower Russia. His wife is one of the Prodgers of this place.

My baggage not having arrived (we got off a station sooner than we should), I showed myself in a white wrapper. What immense difference between myself now and myself a year ago! A year ago I scarcely dared speak, "I knew not what to say," like Marguerite; now I am grown up. This gentleman took breakfast with us. What can I say of him and of all those I shall see? Excellent people, but smelling of the provinces a league away!

Toward dinner, which follows breakfast closely, another visitor, a brother of the aforesaid young man—has traveled much, in spite of which he is very obliging. The sudden arrival of my eight trunks procured us two romanzas sung by *myself*, and some piano playing. Finally, I occupied myself with my embroidery, while entering with all my heart into a conversation on the politics of France, showing a knowledge above my sex.

The second Hamaley, a man with a heavy beard, remained until 10 o'clock.

For an hour longer I fatigued my poor voice, scarcely yet recovered from the rude climate of St. Petersburg.

In this happy Chpatowka we do nothing but eat; we eat, then we walk for half an hour, then we eat again, and it is like that all day.

I was walking slowly, leaning on Paul's arm, with my

Digitized by Google

thoughts wandering, no one knows where, when, passing under branches which fell very low above our heads and formed a ceiling of interlaced leaves, I tried to imagine what A— would say if I were on his arm walking along this walk. He would say to me, leaning slightly toward me, he would say to me, in that soft and penetrating tone, in which he speaks to me only, he would say: "How happy we are here together, and how I love you!"

Nothing can give any idea of the tenderness of his voice when he speaks to me, when he says things meant for me alone. His tiger-cat manners, his eyes that burn you, and that enchanting voice, gentle and vibrating, that murmured word of love, which seemed to complain or plead with so much humility, so much tenderness, so much passion! He made use of this for me only.

But it was an empty tenderness which meant nothing, and if it seemed real it was only his manner, for there are some people who appear always hurried, and others astonished, and others sad, without being so in reality.

Ah, how I would like to know the truth of all this! I wish to return to Rome, married; otherwise, it would be a humiliation. But yet, I do not want to marry, I want to be still free, and above all to study. I have found my vocation.

And frankly, to marry to *pique* A—, would be stupid.

It is not that, but I wish to live like the rest of the world!

I am dissatisfied with myself to-night, and I do not know why in particular.

Wednesday, August 16th (*August 4th*).—A crowd of neighbors, the cream of this noble locality. Among others, a lady who has been to Rome, loves antiquity, and possesses a daughter who does not speak. In a manner, sudden as well as unexpected, there came to us three angels—the judge of instruction, the notary, and the secretary. My uncle, who has been a Justice of the Peace for the State seven years, has always some business with these functionaries.

Digitized by Google

In two years he will be Counselor of State, and he longs to be decorated.

I dressed myself in blue silk, and neat little slippers.

These nice gentlemen did not irritate me, like those musty people at Nice, they simply made me laugh heartily; they did not venture to approach me; we admired each other from a distance.

Sunday, August 20th (*August 8th*).—I left, accompanied by my brother Paul, who waits upon me very well. At Kharkoff we waited two hours. My Uncle Alexander was there. He was, notwithstanding my dispatches, almost astounded to see me. He spoke of my father's great anxiety; how terribly uneasy he was for fear that I would not come to his house.

He continually asked for the dispatches which I sent to my uncle, that he might know at what point I was in my journey.

In a word, the greatest eagerness was displayed to see me; if not through love, at least through self-love.

Uncle Alexander made a few sarcastic remarks about my father; but my policy is, to remain neutral. He procured me a coupé, by presenting me to the Colonel of *Gendarmes*, Menzenkanoff, who gave up his own to me.

I feel well in my own country; everybody knows me, myself, or mine, and there is nothing equivocal in my position; I walk and breathe freely. But I would not live here. Oh, no, no!

This morning, at 6 o'clock, we arrived at Poltava. Nobody at the station.

As soon as I reached the hotel, I wrote the following letter; bluntness is often the best policy:

"I arrive at Poltava, and I find not even a carriage.

"Come immediately. I expect you at noon. Truly, I have not had a suitable reception.

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF."

The letter had scarcely gone, when my father rushed into the room, and I threw myself into his arms, without too much eagerness, however. He was visibly satisfied with my face,

Digitized by Google

for his first care was to examine my whole appearance with a kind of feverish haste.

"How tall you are! I did not expect it, and pretty; yes, yes, well—very well, in fact."

"It is thus you receive me—not even a carriage! Have you received my letter?"

"No; but I have just received the telegram, and I hastened to come. I hoped to arrive in time for the train. I am covered with dust. To come faster, I got in the *troika* of little E—."

"And I wrote you a pretty letter."

"Like the last dispatch?"

"Something."

"Very well—yes, very well."

"I am accustomed to be waited on."

"Like me; but, you see, I am as capricious as a devil."

"And I am as capricious as two!"

"You are used to being run after."

"And I must be run after; I insist upon it!"

"Ah, no, that sort of thing will not do with me!"

"You can do as you please, but you will have to suffer the consequences."

"But why treat me in this lofty manner? I am a jovial companion, a young man, behold!"

"Exactly; so much the better."

"But I am not alone, I am with Prince Michel E—, and Paul G—, your cousin."

"Invite them in."

E— is a perfect little dude—exceedingly amusing, ridiculous, bowing low, engulfed in pantaloons three times the proper size, and in a collar which reaches to his ears.

The other is called Pacha*—his family-name is too difficult. He is a strong and robust fellow, light blonde, clean-shaven, Russian looking, square build, frank, serious, sym-

* Diminutive for Paul.

Digitized by Google

pathetic, but taciturn, or much preoccupied. I do not yet know which.

I was awaited with an immense curiosity. My father is enraptured. My figure enchants him; the vain man is proud to show me off.

We were ready, but had to wait for the servants, and the baggage, that the procession might be more imposing—a four-horse carriage, a *caleche*, and a covered drosky, followed by the little prince's nonsensical *troika*.

My *genitor* looked upon me with satisfaction, and restraining himself with great effort, tried to appear calm, and even indifferent.

Moreover, it is his nature to hide his feelings.

Half-way, I climbed into the drosky, that I might go like the wind. At the end of twenty-five minutes, we had gone over ten *versts*. We were still two *versts* from Gavronzi, and I then returned to my father, that he might have the satisfaction of an imposing arrival.

The Princess E— (Michel's step-mother, and my father's sister) met us on the porch.

"Eh!" ejaculated my father, "how tall she is, and interesting. Is it not so—eh?"

He must have been very proud of me, to venture on such an exhibition of feeling before one of his sisters (but this one is an excellent woman).

A steward and others came to congratulate me on my happy arrival.

The property is picturesquely situated—hills, a river, trees, a beautiful house, and several small houses. All the out-buildings in perfect order, and the garden well kept; moreover, the house has been remodeled, and almost entirely refurnished this winter.

They live in great style, while affecting simplicity, and an air of saying: "It is thus every day."

Naturally, champagne for breakfast. An affectation of

Digitized by Google

aristocracy, and a real simplicity, which relieves the stiffness.

Portraits of ancestors, proofs of antiquity, which are only too pleasing to me.

Beautiful bronzes, porcelains of Sèvres and Saxony, objects of art. In truth, I did not expect so much here.

My father poses, as an unfortunate man abandoned by his wife—he, who desired nothing better than to be a model husband.

A large portrait of mamma painted in her absence.

Tokens of regret to the memory of lost happiness, and bursts of hatred against my grandparents who destroyed this happiness.

Enormous care is taken to make me feel that my arrival changes nothing in the habits of the household.

There was a game of cards, during which I worked at my canvas, from time to time saying a few words, which were listened to with curiosity.

Papa left the card-table and seated himself near me, giving up his hand to Pacha. I talked with him while embroidering, and he listened to me with a great deal of attention.

He then proposed a walk in the country. I walked at first leaning on his arm, then on the arm of my brother, and of the little prince. We stopped to see my nurse, who pretended to be affected to tears. She had nursed me but three months—my true nurse is at Tchernakovka. We walked a long distance.

"It is to give you an appetite," said my father.

I complained of the fatigue, and spoke of my fear of the grass, on account of snakes and other "ferocious animals."

The father is reserved, the daughter also. Were it not for the princess, Michel, and the other, it would be a thousand times more agreeable.

He made me sit beside him to see the athletic feats and gymnastics of Michel, who had learned the "trade" in a circus, which he followed to the Caucasus, all on account of a little *equestrienne*.

Digitized by Google

When I was in my own room, I remembered one of my father's expressions, spoken at random or purposely, and enlarging it in my own imagination, I sat down in a corner and wept for a long time, without budging or moving my eyes, but keeping them fixed on a flower in the wall-paper—crushed, weary, and at times despairing even unto indifference.

This is what it was about. We spoke of A—, and I was asked all sorts of things concerning him. According to my usual habit, I replied with reserve, and did not enlarge on the subject of my conquests, leaving them to be guessed or supposed, and then my father, with great indifference, said this:

"I have heard it said that A— was married three months ago."

And once in my own room I did not reason, I remembered that phrase. I threw myself on the floor and remained there stupefied and miserable.

I looked at his letter. The words "I have need of the consolation of one word from you," have confused my heart, and I almost begin to accuse myself, me!

And then—Oh, what horror to believe you love that which you must not! For I must not love a man like him—a being almost ignorant, a being weak, dependent. I have not even love, I have only weariness.

I was given a green bed-room and a blue parlor. Is it not quite strange, when we think of my peregrinations since that winter? And since I have been in Russia, how many times have I changed guides, lodgings, places?

I change lodgings, relatives, acquaintances, without the least astonishment or that strange feeling I experienced formerly. All those beings, indifferent or patronizing, all these instruments of luxury or utility, become a confused mass in my mind and leave me calm and cold.

How can I succeed in bringing my father to Rome?

Bother, bother, bother!

Tuesday, August 22d (*10th*).—Life here is far removed from the frank hospitality of my Uncle Etienne, and of my Aunt

Digitized by Google

Marie, who gave up their rooms to me, and waited on me like negroes.

But then it is very different. There, I was in a friendly country, at home; here, I come, braving the established relations and treading under my little feet hundreds of quarrels and millions of disagreements.

My father is a reserved man; bruised and crushed from his infancy by the terrible General, his father, no sooner was he free and rich than he launched into dissipation and half-ruined himself.

Puffed up with self-love and puerile pride, he prefers to appear a monster rather than show what he feels, especially when he is moved by something—and in that he is like me.

A blind person could see how enchanted he is to see me, and he even shows it a little when we are alone.

At 2 o'clock we left for Poltava.

This morning we have already had a skirmish over the Babanines, and, while in the carriage, my father went so far as to insult them in the name of his lost happiness, accusing grandmamma of everything. The blood rushed to my face and I requested him, in a harsh tone, to leave the dead in their graves.

"Leave the dead!" cried he, "why I could almost say that if I could take the ashes of that woman and—"

"Enough, father! You are impertinent and ill-bred!"

"Chocolate might be impertinent, but not I!"

"You, dear father, and all those who are wanting in delicacy and education! I will not listen to such talk. If I have the delicacy to be silent, it is ridiculous for others to murmur. You have nothing to do with the Babanines, you may meddle with the affairs of your wife and children—as to the others, do not speak of them, as I do not speak of your own relatives. Appreciate my consideration and do as much."

In speaking thus, I felt the greatest admiration for myself.

"How can you say such things to me?"

Digitized by Google

"I say it, I repeat it—I regret being here."

I turned my back to him, for I was choking with tears and rage.

And then my father commenced to laugh, embarrassed and confused, trying to embrace me and take me in his arms.

"Come, Marie, let us make peace; we will never speak of that again. I will never mention it to you, I give you my word of honor!"

I resumed my natural position, but without giving any token of pardon or good-will, which made papa increase his amiability.

My child, my angel (I am speaking to myself), you are an angel—positively an angel! You always did know how to behave, but you never had the opportunity. Now only do you commence to apply your theories to reality!

At Poltava, my father is king; but what a frightful kingdom!

My father is over-proud of his two Isabella horses. When they were brought to us, harnessed to the barouche, I scarcely deigned to say "Very pretty!"

We went through all the streets—deserted as Pompeii.

How can people live thus? But I am not here to study the customs of the city, so let us pass on.

"Ah!" said my father, "if you had come a little sooner, we had people here then, we could have arranged a ball or some other amusement. Now, there is not even a dog left—the fair is over."

We went into a store to order some canvas. This store is the rendezvous of the dudes of Poltava; but we found no one there.

At the public gardens, the same thing.

My father, I know not why, will introduce me to no one; perhaps it is through fear of too much criticism!

In the middle of dinner, M— arrived.

Six years ago, when we were at Odessa, mamma saw Madame M— frequently, and her son Gritz came every day

Digitized by Google

to play with Paul and me, and made love to me, bringing me bon-bons, flowers, and fruits.

They laughed at us, and Gritz said he would never marry any other woman but me; to which a certain gentleman never missed replying:

"Oh! Oh! what a boy! he wants a minister for a wife." The M—'s came with us as far as the steamer which was to take us to Vienna. I was excessively coquettish, although very small. I had forgotten my comb and Gritz gave me his own, and, at the moment of parting, we kissed each other with the permission of our parents.

"Jours fortunés de notre enfance
Où nous disions, maman, papa!
Jours de bonheur et d' innocence,
Ah! que vous êtes loin déjà."

"You know, adorable cousin, Gritz is a little stupid, and a little deaf," said Michel E—, while M— was coming up the steps of the gallery at the restaurant.

"I know him well, dear coxcomb, he is not more stupid than you and I, and he is a little deaf because of an illness, and more so because he puts wadding in his ears through fear of taking cold."

Many persons had already come up to shake hands with my father, impatient to be introduced to the daughter just arrived from foreign lands; but my father made no move, putting on an expression of disdain, looking at me the while. I began to fear he would do the same with Gritz.

"Marie, permit me to present you Grigori Lvovitch M—," said he, however.

"We have known each other for a long time," said I, graciously extending my hand to the friend of my infancy.

He is not at all changed; the same brilliant complexion, the same dull expression, the same mouth, small and slightly disdainful, a microscopic mustache. Faultless in dress and of excellent manners.

Digitized by Google

We looked at each other with curiosity. Michel made sarcastic grimaces. Papa blinked his eyelids as usual.

I was not at all hungry; it was time to go to the theatre, which is in the garden, like the restaurant.

I proposed that we walk a little and go there afterward. My model of a father rushed between Gritz and me, and when it was time to go to the theatre, he hastened forward and quickly offered me his arm—a true father, on my honor, as we read of in books.

We had an immense proscenium box, draped with red cloth—opposite the prefect's.

I received a bouquet from the prince, who passes the day in making me declarations, to receive such speeches as: Go away, dear boy!—or—You are the flower of dudes, my cousin!

A small audience and an insignificant drama. But our box contained of itself much to interest me.

Pacha is a curious man. Frank and straightforward, even to childishness; he takes everything seriously, and speaks just as he thinks, with so much simplicity, that it sometimes seems to me that he hides under this good-nature an immense fund of sarcasm. He remains sometimes ten minutes without saying anything, and when spoken to, he starts as if he had been dreaming. When, at a compliment from him, I smile and say: "How amiable you are!" he is offended and goes off to a corner murmuring: "I am not at all amiable; if I say it, it is because I think it."

I placed myself in front to gratify my father's vanity.

"Behold!" said he, "behold! here I am playing the rôle of a father now! It is funny. Why, I am still a young man, I!"

"Ah, ah, papa, there is your weakness! Well, you shall be my elder brother and I will call you Constantine. Does that do?"

"Perfectly."

Digitized by Google

M— and I desired very much to converse, we two, together; but Paul, E—, or papa prevented it as if on purpose. Finally, I placed myself in the corner, which is like a little box by itself, overlooking the stage and allowing me to see the preparations of the actors. Naturally, Michel followed me; but I sent him to get me some water, and Gritz seated himself beside me.

"I have been awaiting your arrival with impatience," said he, examining me curiously, "You are not at all changed."

"Oh, that grieves me! I was homely at ten years of age."

"No, no, but you are still the same."

"Humph!"

"I now see the meaning of this glass of water!" mewed the prince, offering me one. "I see it well!"

"Take care! you will spill it on my dress, if you hold it in that way!"

"You are unkind, you are my cousin, and you are always speaking to *him*."

"He is the friend of my childhood, and you, you are a charming dude of a day."

We found that we still remembered all sorts of trifles. "We were both children, but how well we remember all that happened when we were children together! Is it not so?"

"Yes."

M— is old-fashioned; it is so strange to hear this fresh and rosy boy speak of things, serious, domestic, useful! He asked me if I had a good maid, and then—

"It is well that you have studied so much, for when you have children, it will be useful."

"What an idea!"

"What! am I not right?"

"Yes, you are right."

"Here is your Uncle Alexander," said my father to me.

"Where?"

"There, opposite."

In fact, he was there with his wife.

Digitized by Google

Uncle Alexander came to us and my father sent me to Aunt Nadine during the next *entr'acte*. The dear little woman was pleased and so was I.

During one of the *entr'actes*, I went out into the garden with Paul, and my father ran after me and caught me by the arm.

"You see," said my father to me, "how amiable I am toward your relatives; that proves I am well-bred."

"Very well, papa; whoever wishes to stand well with me must bow to my will and serve me."

"Ah, no!"

"Ah, well! as I told you before, you must take the consequences, then; but admit that you are very happy to have a daughter like me—pretty, with a good figure, elegant, intellectual, educated. Admit it!"

"I admit it is true."

"Ah, ah! And without taking into account that you are young, and that everybody will be astonished to find that you have grown-up children."

"Yes, I am still quite young."

"Papa, let us take supper in the garden."

"It is not proper."

"Come, come, papa; with one's father, the marshal of the nobility, who is known to everybody, and who is chief of the youth, of the gilded youth of Poltava!"

"But the horses are waiting."

"That is what I wished to speak of, send them back and we will return in a cab."

"You, in a cab? Never! And to have supper here is not proper."

"Papa, when I descend from my dignity and find a thing proper, it is ridiculous that others should think otherwise."

"We will have supper, then; but you know it is only to please you. I am tired of these amusements."

We had supper in a private room (exacted by my father out of respect for me).

Digitized by Google

My father, Paul, Uncle Alexander and Aunt Nadine, Pacha, E—, M—, and I. M— was continually trying to place my cloak on my shoulders, assuring me that I would take cold.

We drank champagne. E— called for bottle after bottle, to give me the last drop.

Several toasts were proposed, and the friend of my childhood, taking his glass, leaned toward me, and said, softly: "To the health of Madame, your mother!" and as he looked into my eyes, with a friendly air, I replied in a low voice also, with a look of cordial thanks and a friendly smile.

A few minutes afterward, I said, aloud:

"To mamma's health!"

And we drank again. M— watched my least gesture, and tried visibly to conform himself to my opinions, to my tastes, and even my pleasantries; and to embarrass him I amused myself by changing constantly. He listened to me all the time, and finally exclaimed:

"Ah, but she is charming!" with so much artlessness, sincerity, and pleasure, that I was pleased myself.

Aunt Nadine entered the barouche with papa and me. I went home with her, and we gossiped at our ease.

"Dear Moussia," said my Uncle Alexander, "you have enchanted me. Your worthy conduct toward your relatives, and especially toward your father, has enraptured me. I had feared for you, but if you continue, all will be well, I assure you of it!"

"Yes," said Paul, "if you remain one month only, you will rule father, and that will be a real happiness for us all."

My father took a room next to mine, at the right, and made his servant sleep in my antechamber.

"I hope she is well guarded," said he to my uncle. "You know I am a *bon-vivant*, a gay man; but, from the moment her mother confides her to my care, I will justify that confidence and I will fulfill my duty in a sacred manner."

Yesterday, I borrowed 25 roubles from my father, that I might have the pleasure of returning them to him to-day.

Digitized by Google

We departed in the same order as yesterday.

We had scarcely reached the fields when my father asked me, suddenly:

"Well, are we going to skirmish again to-day?"

"As much as you like."

He took me quickly in his arms, enveloped me in his cloak, and leaned my head upon his shoulder.

I closed my eyes, that is my way of being affectionate.

We remained thus for some minutes.

"Now," said he, "stand up straight!"

"Give me a cloak, then, for I am cold."

He wrapped me in a cloak, and I began to speak of foreign countries, of Rome, and the pleasures of society, taking care to make him understand how pleasant it was in Italy, and speaking of Mgr. de Falloux, Baron Visconti, and the Pope. I also had much to say of the society of Poltava.

"It is not right to pass one's life in losing at cards, in ruining one's self buried in the provinces, in drinking champagne in the cabarets, in brutalizing one's self, and in rusting rather than living. Whatever one does, should always be done in good company."

"Humph! You seem to imply that I am in bad company," he said, laughing.

I talked on, and said so much, that finally he asked me how much it would cost to hire an apartment at Nice large enough to give entertainments in.

"You know," he said, "if I should go there and settle down for the winter, the situation would be quite different."

"Whose situation?"

"That of the birds of the air," he said, with a laugh that showed he was piqued.

"My situation? Yes, that is true. But Nice is a disagreeable city. Why not come to Rome this winter?"

"I? Humph! Yes! Humph!"

Well, the subject has been opened, and the seed has fallen

Digitized by Google

on good ground. What I fear are the influences that may be brought to bear. I must manage so that this man will become used to me. I must strive to be agreeable to him, render myself necessary to him, and act so that Aunt T— will find a wall between her brother and his wrong-doing.

He is pleased to find me capable of conversing on all subjects, and as we went to dinner, I finished a conversation on chemistry with a certain Kapitanenko, an officer of the guard, who is absent on leave, and who is becoming brutalized by a provincial life and the eternal nonsense that is talked.

My father said, as he rose:

"It is true, Pacha, she is very learned."

"You are joking, papa."

"Not at all, not at all, but it is well, yes, ah! very well."

Wednesday, August 23d (*August 11th*).—I have written to mamma almost as much as I have in my journal. That will do her more good than all the doctors in the world. I pretend to be very happy, but I am not so yet. I have related everything in the most exact manner, but I shall not be sure of anything until the end of the story. We shall see some day. God is very good.

Pacha is my *real* cousin, the son of my father's sister. He puzzles me. This morning we were talking, and my father's name was mentioned. I said that sons always criticised the actions of their fathers, and once in their place, did the same things, to be in their turn criticised by their children.

"That is perfectly true," he said, "but my sons will not criticise me, for I shall never marry."

After a moment, I replied: "There has never been a young man who has not said the same thing."

"Yes, but it is not the same thing."

"Why not?"

"Because I am twenty-two, and I have never been in love, and no woman has ever even attracted me."

Digitized by Google

"That is quite natural. Before that age, a man ought not to fall in love."

"What! How about those boys who begin at fourteen?"

"Those affairs have nothing to do with real love."

"Perhaps, but I am not like everyone else. I am hot-headed, and proud, and conceited, and then—"

"But those qualities which you speak of—"

"Are good ones?"

"I think so."

Then, I don't remember why, he told me that, if his mother should die, he would go crazy.

"Yes, for a year, and then—"

"No, I should be crazy, I know it."

"For a year, for everything is effaced by new faces."

"Then you deny eternal sentiments and virtue?"

"Positively."

"It is strange, Moussia," he said, "how quickly people become intimate, when they are not affected. The day before yesterday, I said Maria Constantinovna; yesterday, Mademoiselle Moussia, and to-day, Moussia—"

"Moussia simply, as I have ordered you."

"It seems to me that we have always been together, your manners are so simple and engaging."

"Yes?"

I have been amusing myself by talking to the peasants that we meet upon the road and in the forest, and, do you know, I speak low Russian quite well.

The Vorsklo, the river which flows through my father's village, is so shallow in summer that you can wade across it; but in winter it is a flood. I took a fancy to ride my horse into the water, and raising my habit, I immediately entered the river. It was agreeable to feel and charming to see. The horse was in up to his knees.

I was warmed by the sun and the ride, and I tried my voice,

Digitized by Google

which is beginning to return little by little. I sang the "Lacrymosa" of the funeral mass, as at Rome.

My father was waiting for us under the colonnade, and viewed us with a look of contentment.

"Well, did I deceive you? Do I look bad in a riding habit? Ask Pacha how I ride. Do I look well?"

"Yes—humph—very well, really."

And he looked at me with evident satisfaction.

I am far from regretting that I brought thirty gowns; my father must be captured through his vanity.

At this moment, M— arrived with a bag and a servant. When he had saluted me, I answered the usual compliments, and went to change my dress, saying: "I shall be back soon." I returned dressed in a gown of Oriental gauze with two yards of train, a corsage of silk open before in the Louis XV. style and fastened by a large knot of white ribbon. The skirt is all of one piece and the train square.

M— spoke of my toilet and admired it.

He is said to be stupid, but he conversed on several subjects—music, art, and science. It is a fact, however, that it was I who did the talking and he only said: "You are perfectly right; it is true."

I was silent as to my studies, fearing to alarm him. But I forgot myself at dinner; I quoted a Latin verse and discoursed with the doctor on classical literature and the modern imitations of it.

They cried out that I was astonishing, and that there was nothing in the world of which I could not speak, no subject of conversation where I was not at my ease.

Papa made heroic efforts to conceal his pride in me. Then, a chicken with truffles started a culinary discussion, in which I showed a gastronomic knowledge which made M—'s eyes and mouth open still more.

And then, passing to *sophistication*, I explained all the utility of good cooking, maintaining it made men virtuous.

Digitized by Google

I went up to the first floor. The *salons* are very large, especially the ball-room; a piano was placed there only yesterday.

I played. Poor Kapitanenko made despairing gestures to prevent Paul from talking.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the good man, "I forget as I listen that I have rusticated in the provinces the last six years. I live again!"

I did not play well to-night; I often slurred my work; and yet, there are things which I don't play badly. But it made no difference; I knew that poor Kapitanenko was sincere, and the pleasure that I gave him gave me pleasure also.

Kapitanenko was on my left, Eristoff and Paul behind, and Gritz in front of me listening to me with a delighted countenance; I did not see the rest.

When I had finished "Le Ruisseau," they all kissed my hand.

Papa, lying upon a sofa, dozed. The princess sewed without saying anything, but she is a good woman.

I breathe freely, I am in my father's house, my father is one of the head of the government, and I have neither lack of respect nor frivolity to fear.

At 10 o'clock, papa gave the signal for retiring, confiding to Paul's care the young men, who are all lodged in the red house with him.

I said to my father: "When I go away again, you will come with me."

"I will think of it; yes, perhaps."

I was satisfied; there was a pause, then they spoke of something else, and when he retired, I went to the princess' room to remain a quarter of an hour with her.

I have asked my father to invite Uncle Alexander here, and he has written him a very pleasant letter.

What is your opinion of me?

I say that I am an angel, provided God continues to be good.

Digitized by Google

Don't laugh at my devotion, or you will begin to find everything in my journal ridiculous. If I should undertake to criticise myself as I write, I should pass my whole life in doing so.

Thursday, August 24th (*August 12th*).—At 9 o'clock I went to my father's room. I found him in his shirt sleeves, struggling with his cravat. I tied it for him, and kissed him on the forehead.

The gentlemen came to take tea, Pacha among them; yesterday evening, he was absent, and a servant came to say that he was "sick in bed." The others had laughed at his bearish attentions to me, and he is so deeply sensitive over the least thing that no one could get a word out of him this morning.

E— brought for my amusement some ninepins, a game of croquet, and a microscope with a collection of fleas.

At one time, there came very near being a scandal. It happened like this. Paul had taken out of his album the photograph of an actress very well known by my father, and papa, noticing it, took out his own picture.

"Why do you do that?" asked Paul, in astonishment.

"Because I fear that you will throw away my pictures *also*."

I paid no attention to this; but to-day, Paul, taking me aside, led me into a room, and showed me his album empty of all pictures except that of the woman in question.

"I did that to please father, but I had to take out of the album all the other pictures; here they are!"

"Let me see them."

I selected all the photographs of grandpapa, grandmamma, mamma, and myself, and put them in my pocket.

"What does that mean?" exclaimed Paul.

"It means," I answered, calmly, "that I take away our pictures, because they are in very bad company here."

My brother was almost ready to cry; he tore the album in two, and left the room. I did this openly in the *salon* with people about, and my father will know of it.

Digitized by Google

We took a long walk in the garden and visited the chapel, and the tomb containing the coffins of my grandfather and grandmother Bashkirtseff. M— was my escort and aided me to descend and ascend the steps.

Michel followed me, imitating the mute, supplicating looks of a dog, and continually making despairing gestures toward Gritz.

Pacha marched on ahead, and when he looked at me, his eyes had such a strange expression that I turned away my head.

If mamma knew that at the supper of Poltava, I had, by accident, the last drop of a bottle of champagne, and that, in drinking my health, the arms of Nadine, Uncle Alexander, Gritz, and myself were crossed as for a marriage—poor mamma, how happy she would be!

Gritz is certainly attentive, but I pray from the bottom of my soul that he will not propose to me. He is narrow, vain, and has a hateful mother.

We were recalling our childhood, in the public garden of Odessa.

"I was in love with you then."

I answered with my best smiles, while the dude made imploring faces and begged me to let him carry my train. He did that yesterday, and received the nickname of train-bearer.

We then played a game of croquet.

Agreeably warmed by my exercise, I entered the Chinese room (so called because of the Chinese vases and images in it), and, seating myself on the ground, began to arrange my brushes and colors. My father was incredulous as to my talents. I made Michel sit down in an arm-chair and Gritz in another, and in fifteen minutes I made a caricature of Michel upon a board, which Gritz, whom I used as an easel, held. And as I made marks right and left with my pencil, I felt that he was devouring me with his eyes.

My father was pleased and Michel kissed my hand.

Digitized by Google

I rose and sat down at the piano. Pacha listened to me from a distance. The others soon came in and placed themselves as they did yesterday. But, passing from music to conversation, Gritz and Michel spoke of a winter in St. Petersburg.

"And I can imagine what you will do there," said I. "Do you want me to tell you your life now, and you can tell me afterward if I am mistaken."

"Yes, yes."

"In the first place, you will furnish an apartment with the most ridiculous furniture, sold by pretended antiquarians, and with the most ordinary paintings sold for originals. For, a passion for art and antiquities is the correct thing. Then you will have horses and a coachman who will indulge in familiarities; you will consult him, and he will meddle even in your affairs of the heart. You will go out with a single eye-glass upon the Newsky, you will see a group of friends, and you will descend to learn the news of the day. You will laugh until the tears come into your eyes at the sallies of one of those friends whose trade it is to say witty things. You will ask the date of Judic's benefit, and if anyone has been at Madame Damie's reception. You will make fun of the Princess Lise, and admire the young Countess Sophie. You will go into Borreel's, where there is doubtless a Frenchman, a Baptiste, or a Désiré, who knows you, and who will approach you with a cringing bow, and tell you of the suppers that have taken place and that have not taken place; of the last scandal concerning Prince Pierre, and of Constance's adventure. You will swallow with a frightful grimace a glass of something strong, asking if what was served at the prince's last supper was better prepared than what was eaten at the supper you gave. And Baptiste or Désiré will answer: 'The prince! can you think it, gentlemen?' He will tell you that he imported expressly for you a turkey from Japan, and truffles from China. You will throw him 2 roubles, with a glance about the room, and will enter your carriage to gaze at the

Digitized by Google

ladies, staring boldly to the right and left, and exchanging remarks with the coachman, who is as big as an elephant, and who is celebrated among your friends for his ability to drink three *samovars* a day. You will go to the theatre and step upon the feet of those in front of you, and shake hands with, or rather, hold out your fingers to friends who speak to you of the success of the new actress, while you gaze at the women with your most impertinent air, thinking that you are producing an effect. And how mistaken you are! How the women see through you! You will ruin yourselves, prostrating yourselves before Parisian stars, who, extinct in Paris, have come to shine in your country. You take supper and you go to sleep upon the floor; but the waiters of the restaurant do not leave you in peace, they put pillows under your head and cover you up over your dress-coat steeped in wine and your rumpled shirt. You return home in the morning to go to bed, or rather, you are brought home. And how pale, ugly, and wrinkled you are! And how you even pity yourself! Then, then—toward thirty-five or forty, you fall desperately in love with a *danseuse* and marry her. She beats you and you play the most miserable part in the wings while she dances."

Here I was interrupted. Gritz and Michel fell on their knees and demanded my hand to kiss, exclaiming that it was wonderful and that I spoke like a book.

"Except," said Gritz, "the latter part of it. All is true except the *danseuse*. I shall marry only a woman in good society. I am a domestic man; I shall adore my home, my wife, and big, crying babies."

We played a game of croquet and papa watched us. He noticed Gritz's attentions. How could he help being attentive? I am the only girl here.

He was to have left at 4 o'clock, but at 5 he asked me if he could remain to dinner, and, after dinner, he declared that he preferred not to start on his journey at night.

Digitized by Google

I spoke of furniture, carriages, liveries, and the service of a house, and I was pleased to see how my father drank in my words and asked me various questions, forgetting his pride and reserve.

Gritz talked a good deal, like a senseless boy, but with an affectation of a man of the world.

I had all my photographs in my hand, and he asked me to give him one. I did not know how to refuse, and then he is an old friend, so I consented.

But I refused the little medallion for which he was ready to give "two years of his life."

Ah! Dio mio!

Friday, August 25th (*August 13th*).—M— and Michel went away after breakfast.

My father proposed a walk to Pavlosk, his other property.

He is perfect in his manner toward me; but to-day, I was nervous and spoke little. If I had attempted to talk, I should have burst into tears.

But, as I thought of the effect that this complete absence of any festivals or gaiety would have upon mamma, I said to my father that I wanted society, and that I found my position strange and even ridiculous. "Well," he answered, "you shall have whatever you like. Do you want me to take you to see the prefect's wife?"

"Yes."

"Very well, we will go then."

Reassured upon this subject, I could tranquilly visit the different parts of the farm, and even enter into the various details, which did not amuse me much; but it might be useful for me, some day, to say a word or two which would show my agricultural knowledge, and to astonish someone, by speaking of the sowing of barley, and the qualities of wheat, in the same breath that I quoted a verse of Shakespeare, or delivered a tirade upon Platonic philosophy.

You see, I derive advantage from everything.

Digitized by Google

Pacha procured me an easel, and, about dinner-time, I received two large canvases sent from Poltava by M—.

"What do you think of M—?" asked papa.

I said what I thought of him.

"Well," said Pacha, "he did not please me at first, but afterward I liked him."

"And did I please you at first sight?" I asked.

"You? Why?"

"Come, tell me."

"Well, yes, you did. I did not expect to find you what you are. I thought that you did not know how to speak Russian; that you were affected, and—"

"That will do. Very well."

I said that the country and the fields, already despoiled of their products, produced a sad effect upon me.

"Yes," said Pacha, "everything is yellow and withered. How time flies! It seems as if spring were only yesterday."

"It is always so. Ah! we are fortunate in the South; we have not such marked changes."

"But then, you don't enjoy the spring!" exclaimed Pacha, eagerly.

"That is all the better for us. Sudden changes affect the equanimity, and life is much better when one is calm."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that spring, in Russia, is a time favorable to villainy and deception."

"What?"

"During the winter, when all about us is cold, silent, and sombre, we are sombre, and cold, and defiant. When the warm, sunny days arrive, we are transformed, for the state of the weather has an enormous influence over the character, the temper, and even the convictions of man. In the spring we feel happier, and we are, consequently, better; hence, we are incredulous of evil and baseness. How, when everything is so beautiful, and when I am so happy, so filled with enthu-

Digitized by Google

siasm, and so thoroughly disposed to good, how can there be any place for bad thoughts in the hearts of others? That is what one says to one's self. Well, with us at home, we do not experience these feelings, or, at least, more feebly; whence, I conclude that we are in a more normal state, and one which undergoes but slight fluctuation."

Pacha mustered up courage, after this, and asked me for my portrait, to wear in a locket all his life.

"For I honor and love you, as I do no one else!"

The princess opened her eyes wide, and I laughed, as I held out my hand for my cousin to kiss.

He hesitated, blushed, and ended by obeying me.

He is a strange, half-savage man. This afternoon, I spoke of my contempt for the human race.

"Ah, is it so?" he cried. "I am a coward, a wretch then!"

And red and trembling, he rushed from the room.

Saturday, August 26th (August 14th).—The country is wearisome!

With incredible rapidity, in the course of thirty-five minutes, I sketched two portraits—my father's, and Paul's.

How many women in this world could say as much?

My father, who had estimated my talent as vain boasting, recognized it, and was pleased; and I was overjoyed, for, to paint, is to advance toward one of the ends I have in view. Every hour passed in any other occupation than that, or in flirting (for flirting leads to love, and love to marriage, perhaps), is like a weight on my heart. To read? No. To act? Yes.

This morning, my father entered my room, and, after a few commonplace speeches, there was a silence, during which I felt that he had something to say, and as I wished to talk of the same thing, I purposely held my tongue, partly not to be the one to open the subject, and partly to have the pleasure of seeing the hesitation and embarrassment of another than myself.

Digitized by Google

"Humph!—then—what did you say?" he asked, at last.

"I, papa? Nothing."

"Humph!—you have suggested—humph!—that I should go with you to Rome—humph!—but how?"

"Why, it is very simple."

"But—"

He hesitated, and pulled about my brushes and combs.

"But if I go with you—humph!—and mamma—she will not come, will she? And then, you see—humph!—what can we do?"

Ah, ah, naughty papa! We are there, are we? You are the one who hesitates. Charming! I like this.

"Mamma? Mamma will come."

"Ah!"

"Mamma, besides, will do anything that I want. She no longer exists—there is only I."

Then, plainly relieved, he asked me many questions as to the manner in which mamma passed her time—a host of things, in fact.

Why did mamma warn me as to papa's wicked temper, and his habit of abashing people and humiliating them? I think I can divine the truth.

But why am I neither humiliated nor abashed, while mamma was so always?

Because my father has more intellect than mamma and not so much as I have. Besides, he has enormous respect for me, for I always beat him in discussion, and my conversation is full of interest for a man buried in Russia, but who has enough knowledge to appreciate learning in others.

I recalled to him my desire to see the people of Poltava, and I saw clearly by his responses that he did not wish to show me those people among whom he is accustomed to shine. But when I told him that I absolutely wished it, he replied that it should be according to my desire, and he began, with the aid of the princess, to make a list of the ladies that we must go and see.

Digitized by Google

"Do you know Madame M—?" I asked.

"Yes; but I am not going to see her; she lives very retired."

"But I must go to her house with you. She knew me when I was little. She is a friend of mamma's, and then, when she saw me last, I was a very rude little girl and not at all prepossessing, so I desire to efface the bad impression I made."

"Well, we will go. But, if I were in your place, I would not."

"Why?"

"Because—humph!—she may think—"

"What?"

"Oh, all sorts of things!"

"But tell me. I like people to explain themselves clearly and hints make me impatient."

"She will think that you have designs. She will believe that you would like her son as a suitor."

"Gritz M—? Oh, no, papa! She will not think that, and besides, M— is a charming young man, a friend of my childhood, whom I like very much; but to marry him! No, papa, he is not the husband I desire! Have no fear."

The Cardinal is dying.

Miserable man! (I mean the nephew.)

At dinner we were speaking of bravery, and I said a remarkably true thing. It was that the one who is afraid and faces danger is braver than the one who is devoid of fear, for the more fear one has the more merit there is in subduing it.

Sunday, August 27th (*August 15th*).—For the first time in my life, I have punished someone—I mean Chocolate.

He wrote to his mother, asking her permission to remain in Russia at much larger wages than those I give him. This ingratitude made me ashamed of him, and calling him, I exposed his bad behavior before everybody, and ordered him to go down on his knees.

The boy commenced to cry, and did not obey. Then I was obliged to take him by the shoulders, and, more through shame

Digitized by Google

than by force, he knelt down, almost knocking over a little table covered with Sèvres china. And I, erect in the middle of the room, launched at him the thunders of my eloquence, and ended by telling him that I should send him back to France, fourth-class, with cattle and sheep, by the help of the colored consul.

"Shame, shame, Chocolate! You will grow up to be a bad man. Rise! Fie! Go!"

I was really excited, and when, five minutes afterward, the monkey came to beg my pardon, I told him that if he only repented because induced to do so by Monsieur Paul, I did not want his repentance.

"No, it is myself."

"Then you repent of your own accord?"

He cried, with his fists in his eyes.

"Tell me, Chocolate, I will not be angry."

"Y—yes."

"Well, go, I forgive you; but you must understand that it was all for your good."

Ah! Chocolate will be a great man or a great rascal!

Monday, August 28th (*August 16th*).—My father has been to Poltava; he was on service there. I tried philosophy with the princess; but it degenerated into a conversation upon love, men, and kings.

Michel brought Uncle Alexander, and Gritz arrived later.

There are some days when I am ill at ease. To-day, is one of them.

M— brought a bouquet to the princess. In the evening, I was very anxious that Uncle Alexander should see how attentive Gritz was to me, but all in vain. The imbecile never left Michel.

He is stupid, and everybody says so here. I have tried to defend him, but this evening, either from conviction or from bad temper, I share the opinion of everybody else.

When they had departed for the red house, I sat down at

Digitized by Google

the piano and tried to work off, by playing, all the weariness and irritation I felt. And now I am going to sleep and to dream of the Grand Duke Nicholas. That will amuse me, perhaps.

The moon is insipid here. I looked at it while they fired off a cannon. My father has gone to Kharkoff for two days. The cannon is one of his vanities. He has nine pieces of artillery, and this evening they fired them off, while I looked at the moon.

Tuesday, August 29th (*August 17th*).—Yesterday, I heard Paul say to Uncle Alexander, with a glance at me:

"If you only knew, dear uncle! She has turned everything topsy-turvy at Gavronzi. She has remodeled papa in her own fashion. Everything and everybody bows down before her."

Really, have I done all that? So much the better.

I have been sleepy and tired since this morning. I do not admit yet that I am bored because of lack of distraction or amusement, and when I am bored I seek a reason for it, persuaded that this more or less great malady comes from *something*, and that it is not a simple effect of solitude or the lack of amusement.

But here at Gavronzi, I desire nothing, I regret nothing, everything goes as I would like to have it, and yet I am *bored*. Must I then think simply that I don't care for the country? *Nescio*. But what difference does it make?

When they sat down to cards, I remained in my studio with Gritz and Michel. There is no doubt about it—Gritz is changed since yesterday. There is a certain embarrassment in his manner I can not explain.

His departure is put off until Thursday, and he wishes to go away for a long journey.

I was preoccupied and they noticed it. For some time, indeed, I have hovered between two worlds. People speak to me and I do not hear.

Digitized by Google

The gentlemen went to bathe in the river which is beautiful, deep, and shaded with trees at the bathing-place; and I remained with the princess upon a large balcony, which forms a covered entrance for carriages.

The princess told me, among others, a curious story. Yesterday, Michel came to her and said: "Mamma let me be married." "To whom?" "To Moussia." "You goose, you are only eighteen!" He persisted so seriously that she was obliged to scold him soundly. "But, dear Moussia," she added, "don't tell him I have told you; he would eat me up."

The gentlemen, on their return, found us still on the balcony, burning up with the exasperating heat, for there was no air to speak of, and in the evening no breeze at all. But the view was charming. In front, the red house and the pavilions scattered here and there; on the right, the mountain, halfway up which is the church buried in foliage, and higher still the family tomb; on the left, the river, fields, trees, space. And to think that all this is ours; that we are sovereign masters of it all; that all these houses, this church, and the court-yard, which is like a little city, all, all belong to us; and the domestics, almost sixty, and all!

I waited impatiently for dinner to be over so that I could see Paul and ask an explanation of certain words spoken at croquet, and which annoyed me exceedingly.

"Haven't you noticed," said Paul to me, "that Gritz has changed since yesterday?"

"I? No, I haven't noticed it."

"Well, I have, and it is Michel's fault."

"How?"

"Michel is a good boy, but he has been only with women of a certain class and he does not know how to behave himself; besides, he has a bad tongue, the proof of which is the story of the other day. He said that he would—in short, he is madly in love with you and capable of all the villainies in the world. I have

Digitized by Google

spoken to Uncle Alexander about it, and he said that I ought to box his ears. Aunt Nathalie is of the same opinion. Wait! I must tell you that Gritz has been persuaded by his mother or by his acquaintances that people are trying to trap him into a marriage, because of his large fortune. Well, up to yesterday, he lauded you to the skies, and yesterday— Of course, I know that you don't want him, that you don't care a rap about all this, but still, it is not pleasant. And Michel is to blame with his gossip."

"Yes, but what can be done?"

"You must speak to him, make him understand; you have enough brains for that and more, too; he is stupid, but you can make him understand—in fact, you must. When we are at dinner, I will help you, and you can tell some story or other that will make him see the point."

That was my idea, also.

"We shall see, brother."

Uncle Alexander came to the theatre after us, and he heard people speaking of the arrival of "Bashkirtseff's daughter, who is a great beauty."

In the *foyer*, he was seized by Gritz, who spoke enthusiastically of me.

When we returned home, I could not prevent myself from making a picture on the grand staircase. I sat down halfway up; the gentlemen who were going up with me seated themselves lower upon the stairs, and the prince knelt. Have you seen the engraving representing Goethe's "Eleonore?" It was like that, even my costume, except that I looked at no one; I looked at the lamps.

If Paul had not extinguished one of them, we would have remained there a long time.

Good-night! Ah, how weary I am!

Wednesday, August 30th (*August 18th*).—While the young men were pursuing the housekeeper with fire-crackers which

Digitized by Google

they threw at her legs, the princess, Uncle Alexander, and I spoke of the Pope of Rome.

I pretended to be anxious about the Cardinal's death.

I dreamed that Pietro A— was dead. I approached his coffin and placed on his neck a topaz rosary with a gold cross. Scarcely had I done so, when I saw that the dead man was not Pietro.

To dream of a corpse is a sign of marriage, I believe. You can imagine my irritation, and with me irritation is shown by immobility and absolute silence. And woe to the one who teases me or even makes me speak!

They talked of the morals of Poltava. Depravity is very widespread here, and they say that Madame M—, in a dressing-gown, has been met at night in the street with Monsieur J—, as if it were an ordinary thing.

The young ladies behave with extreme levity; but when they began to talk of kisses, I took refuge in my chamber.

"A young man was in love with a young girl, who loved him in return; but, after some time, he married another, and, when asked the reason of the change, he answered: 'She kissed me; therefore, she must have kissed others, or she will do so!'"

"He was quite right," said Uncle Alexander. And all men think the same thing.

But it is unjust in the highest degree, and the speech has sent me to my room, enraged beyond measure.

It seemed as if they were speaking of me. Then, this was the reason of it all!

But, in the name of heaven, grant me power to forget! Oh, God, have I committed a crime, then, that You torture me so much?

You are right, Lord, and my conscience, by leaving me not a moment in peace, will cure me.

What neither education, books, nor advice could teach me, I have learned by experience.

I thank God for it, and I advise young ladies to be a little

Digitized by Google

more selfish at the bottom of their hearts, and to guard themselves well from feeling any sentiment whatever.

The more beautiful the sentiment is, the easier it is to ridicule it; the greater it is, the funnier it is. And there is nothing in the world more absurd and more degrading than love which is ridiculed.

I will go to Rome with my father; I will go into society, and we shall see.

A delightful drive. The prince's *troika*, despite Uncle Alexander's weight, went like the wind. Michel drove. I love to go fast; the three horses tore along, and for some minutes I was filled with delight and excitement. Then, croquet detained us until dinner, about which time M— arrived. I was already trying to think of "a story," when the princess happened to mention the R— girls.

"They are very nice, but very unfortunate," said Gritz.

"Why?"

"Because they do nothing but travel about in search of husbands, and they never find them. By the way, they tried to catch me."

Here, everybody burst out laughing.

"To catch you?" asked someone; "Did you please them, then?"

"Well, I rather think—; but, anyway, they soon saw that I would not have it."

"Just to think!" I exclaimed, "It must be very unfortunate to be like that, without counting the discomfort given to others!"

Everyone laughed, and glances were exchanged which were anything but flattering for poor M—.

Oh, well, you see, it is a very unfortunate thing to be a simpleton!

In his manners this evening, I remarked the same constraint as yesterday. He fancied, possibly, that we were trying to ensnare him.

All that comes of Michel!

Digitized by Google

Gritz scarcely dared to speak to me across the length of the drawing-room, and it was almost half-past 9 ere he risked himself at my side. I smiled with disdain.

Heavens, how stupid it is to be stupid! I was formal and severe, and gave the signal for departure.

I know perfectly well that Michel stuffs him with all sorts of ridiculous notions.

The princess once said to me: "You can never conceive of Michel's villainy; he is bad and clever."

But how unfortunate to be a fool!

Thursday, August 31st (August 19th).—Paul, utterly disconcerted, came to tell me that papa did not wish us to go on a picnic to the forest.

I threw on a wrapper and went to tell him we were going.

At the end of ten minutes, he joined me.

After a lot of very funny misunderstandings, we set out for the forest; I in excellent spirits, proof against everything.

Gritz is as easy as the first day, and restraint and discomfort have vanished from our intercourse.

We were as well served in the forest as at home. Everyone was hungry and ate heartily, while making merry at Michel's expense; for he was to have managed the party, but this morning he denied it shamelessly, and the provisions came from Gavronzi.

There was some shooting, and a Jew was made to amuse us with his stupidity. In Russia, the Jew is a creature who holds a place between the dog and the ape. The Jews know how to do everything, and are made use of for everything. They are robbed of their money, beaten, and made drunk; business is confided to them, and they serve for amusement.

On re-entering my room, I was so worn out that I should have spent the night in crying, if Amalia had not begun gabbling at a rate that diverted the current of my thoughts.

It is best to shake off the blues, and avoid tearful scenes and lowness of mind.

Digitized by Google

Moreover, I detest myself when I make these scenes.

Poor Gritz! At the present moment I pity him, for he left somewhat ill.

Saturday, September 2d (*August 21st*).—I have been fainting with the heat, and, when near dinner-time, there arrived two *crocodiles* of Poltava, I made a grand toilet; but my spirits were very low. They set off fireworks, and we looked on from the balcony which was all decked out with Venetian lanterns, as was the red house and all the court-yard.

Afterward, the night being wonderfully beautiful, father proposed a walk. I changed my dress, and we went into the village.

We seated ourselves in front of the cabaret, where a violinist and a mountebank were called up to dance for us. But the violinist, being accustomed to play only second fiddle, would never understand that the first was absent, and insisted on playing his second part. After listening half an hour, we slipped off to the house with perfidious intentions, to-wit: My father, Paul, and I, climbed up a dizzy ladder into the belfry and rang the fire-bell. I rang with all my strength. I was never before so close to a bell, and I found that if one attempts to speak while it is ringing, one experiences a sort of terrifying feeling at the first instant; for the words seem to die at the lips, as in a nightmare.

Well, all that did not prove very amusing, and I was very glad to get back to my room, to which my father accompanied me, and we had a *longissime* conversation.

But I was worn out, and instead of talking, I cried the whole time. Among others, he spoke to me about M—, saying that mamma had doubtless indicated him to me as an excellent *parti*, but that he would not take a step to arrange the match, as M— was nothing but a golden beast. I hastened to reassure him. After that, we spoke of everything. Father tried to affect firmness, but I did not yield an inch, and we parted on excellent terms. Moreover, he displayed, as has

Digitized by Google

been his manner for some time past, an exquisite delicacy, and in his dry, bluff way, said to me things so tender that they touched me deeply. I do not trouble myself on account of his sister T—; I even told father that she dominates him, and that, for this reason, I can not count on him.

"Me!" he exclaimed, "Oh, no! Why, of all my sisters she is the one I care for the least. Rest easy; when she sees you here, she will fawn upon you like a dog, and you will see her at your feet."

Sunday, September 3d (August 22d).—It appears that I am amusing myself. I have been borne in a rug like Cleopatra; I have tamed a horse, like Alexander; and I have painted like — someone who *is not yet* Raphael.

This morning a number of us went fishing. Extended upon a rug (I pause to say that it would not do to have anyone suspect me of rolling on the ground) on the bank of the river, which is deep and beautiful at this point, in the shade of the trees, eating watermelons brought by the *crocodiles* from Poltava, we passed comfortably enough a couple of hours. On the return it was that I played Cleopatra, letting them carry me in the rug as far as the gate, and there we met Michel and Kapitanenko, who improvised a litter for me, by joining hands; and finally, Pacha carried me by himself. Having thus exhausted the various means of locomotion, I found myself at the foot of the grand staircase, which I mounted without assistance; but with Michel still dangling at the end of my train.

I was charming at breakfast—I mean as far as my toilet goes. I wore a Neapolitan blouse of pale-blue *crêpe de Chine*, trimmed with old lace; a long skirt of white taffeta and rich Oriental stuff, striped with white, blue, and gold, draped in the most perfect manner. You could not imagine anything more odd and pretty.

While some were playing cards and others howling at the heat, someone spoke of the Isabella horses, praising their youth, strength, and freshness.

Digitized by Google

For several days, the question of my riding one of them had been discussed; but it had aroused a torrent of fears, and I had not urged the matter. Finally, to-day, partly through shame of my cowardice and partly to give the *crocodiles* something to talk about, I ordered one of the animals to be saddled.

While I was waiting, my father kept glancing from me to the *crocodiles*, and seemed contented with the impression I made. My costume was odd, but still very becoming; and I wore upon my head a piece of white foulard, low over my forehead, drawn together behind and with the ends hanging down, after the manner of the Egyptians, covering all the back of my neck. They brought the horse, and there was a chorus of objections. Finally, Kapitanenko, in memory of his service in the horse-guards, mounted him; but as soon as the horse started, he was so bounced about, that the charitable spectators began to laugh as stupidly as could be.

The horse reared, stopped short, ran, and Kapitanenko declared, in the midst of the general gaiety, that I could ride him—in three months. I looked at the trembling beast, whose skin was everywhere covered with veins, as when the wind wrinkles the surface of water, and I said to myself: "You must give these people an exhibition of your false bravery, my child, you must behave like a girl of high degree, so that the *crocodiles* shall have nothing to say to your disadvantage. You are afraid? So much the better, for those only are brave who are afraid and do battle with what they fear. Bravery does not consist in doing a thing which others are afraid of and which does not alarm you; but real, true bravery is the forcing one's self to do something that one fears."

I ran upstairs, put on my black habit and a black velvet cap, and descended again to mount the horse.

I walked him first slowly about the lawn, with Kapitanenko by my side on another horse. Feeling the eyes of the company fixed upon me, I returned to the veranda to reassure

Digitized by Google

them; my father and another gentleman entered a cabriolet, the others took their places in the prince's *troika*, and followed by the two carriages, I rode down the avenue. I don't know how, but quite simply it seemed to me, I trotted, then galloped, and returned to the carriages to be overwhelmed with flatteries.

I was delighted, and my scarlet face seemed to breathe fire like the nostrils of my horse. I was radiant! A horse that had never been ridden!

In the evening there were fireworks, the houses were illuminated, and my initials were displayed on all sides. There was a village band and the peasants danced.

The table was laid on the other side of the house, and we walked through the curious crowd.

"Why, it is a regular church procession," said a woman in the crowd, "and there is the body of Our Lord."

In fact, we were lighted by torches, and Michel carried my train, and you know that they carry on Good Friday a picture representing the body of Jesus.

Michel performed some acrobatic feats, while the village boys watched him in amazement; clinging to the ropes and the swings, and looking, in the darkness, like the figures swinging on gibbets one sees in ghastly, old engravings.

I was surrounded by the people, and both men and women, to gain my favor, loaded me with compliments like this, for instance:

"The horse was beautiful this afternoon, but the rider far surpassed him!"

You know how I adore to mix with the common people, so I spoke to them all and came very near joining in the dancing. Ah, the dance of our peasants, apparently innocent, but, in reality, clever as the Italian dances, is a real Parisian cancan, and a very seditious cancan, not to say anything more. They do not raise their legs as high as their heads, which, moreover, is a very ugly fashion; but the man and the woman turn,

Digitized by Google

approach each other, pursue one another, and all this with little cries, gestures, and smiles that make you shiver.

The young girls dance little and very simply.

We ordered something for them to drink, and taking leave of the amiable savages, I concluded to go to bed; but I stopped upon the staircase as I did the other evening, and Paul and the others grouped themselves upon the steps below. Chocolate sang us a Nicene song, to my great satisfaction.

After the song, came instrumental music.

I drew from the violin the most unheard-of sounds, piercing, crying, hideous, which made me laugh heartily, and my laughter, with the furious accompaniment, sent the rest into convulsions, even Chocolate.

Thursday, September 7th (*August 26th*).—The everyday costume of a Little Russian woman consists of a garment of heavy cloth, with large, puffed sleeves, and embroidered with red and blue; and a piece of black cloth, manufactured by the peasants, and which is wrapped about the figure from the waist down. This sort of apron is shorter than the main garment, the embroidery of which is seen below the apron. The apron is held up only by a colored woolen belt. A quantity of necklaces are worn and a ribbon is bound about the head. The hair is arranged in a net, from the end of which hang several ribbons.

I sent and bought such a dress from the peasants, put it on, and, accompanied by our young men, went into the village. The peasants did not recognize me, for I was not dressed as a young lady, but entirely as a peasant, a girl—the married women dress differently. On my feet I wore black slippers with red heels.

I bowed to everybody, and, when we reached the cabaret, we sat down near the door.

When my father saw me, he was surprised, but delighted.

"What won't she do next?" he cried. He made us all four enter his open carriage and drove us about the streets.

Digitized by Google

I laughed immoderately, to the great astonishment of the good villagers, who wondered who this young peasant was who was being driven about by "the old lord" and "the young gentlemen." Papa, however, is not old.

A Chinese tom-tom, a violin, and a music-box amused us in the evening.

Michel beat the tom-tom, I played the violin, (played, may the Lord forgive me), and the music-box played itself.

Instead of retiring at an early hour, as is his custom, the author of my being stayed with us until midnight. If I have made no other conquest, I have made my father's. When he speaks, he seeks my approbation; he listens to me with attention; he lets me say what I like of Aunt T—, and he agrees with me.

The music-box was his present to the princess; we all gave her something; it is her birthday.

The domestics are delighted to serve me and to be delivered from the "French." I even order the dinners. And to think that I looked upon this as a strange house, and was afraid of its habits and its regular hours!

They wait for me as at Nice, and I fix the hours for everything myself.

My father adores gaiety, and he is not accustomed to it in his own family.

Friday, September 8th (August 27th).—Miserable fear, I will conquer you! Did I not take it into my head yesterday to be afraid of a gun? It is true that Paul had loaded it, that I did not know how much powder he had put in, and that I was unacquainted with the gun. It might have exploded, and that would have been a stupid death; or, I might have been disfigured for life.

So much the worse! It is only the first step that counts; yesterday, I fired at fifty paces, and I fired to-day without any sort of fear. I believe—heaven forgive me—that I hit the bull's-eye every time.

Digitized by Google

If I succeed with Paul's portrait, it will be a miracle, for he will not sit for me, and to-day I worked only fifteen minutes. I was alone; no, not entirely, for opposite to me was Michel, who has dared to fall in love with me.

All this brought us to 9 o'clock. I loitered, and loitered, and loitered, seeing how impatient my father was. I knew very well that he was only awaiting our departure to fly into the forest—like a wolf.

I again held my court upon the stairs. I love stairs, because by them we go up higher. Pacha was to go away to-morrow, but I said so much this evening that perhaps he will remain; although it would be more sensible of him to go, for to love me as a sister is dangerous for a country-bred gloomy dreamer of twenty-two. With him and Michel, I am at my best, so of course they are very fond of me; but when I am with stupid men, I become stupid myself. I do not know what to say that will be intelligible to them, and I am afraid every instant that they will suspect me of being in love with them. Like that poor Gritz, for instance, who thinks every girl is longing for him, and sees, in the least smile, traps and plots against his celibacy. Do you know the derivation of that word, celibacy?

Coelebs, in Latin, means forsaken; it comes also from the Greek word *Koïlos*, which means empty, worthless.

Oh, celibates! empty, worthless, forsaken creatures!

As soon as I heard my father go out, I rushed into the princess' room, threw myself on her bed, then brushed Pacha's hair, patted Michel on the head, and said so many silly things that I am at this moment astounded at myself. May God grant that I do not grow to detest Pacha, the good boy, he is so honest!

We have been reading Poushkine aloud, and we discussed love.

Ah, I would really like to fall in love, to know what it is;

Digitized by Google

but perhaps I have already loved? In that case, love is a contemptible thing that one picks up, only to throw away again.

"You will never love," my father said to me.

"If that were true, I should thank heaven for it," I replied.

I want to, and I do not want to.

Yet, in my dreams, *I love;* yes, but an imaginary hero.

And A—? I love him? No, is this the way one loves? No. If he were not the nephew of a Cardinal, if he had not about him priests, monks, ruins, the Pope, I should not love him.

Besides, what need have I to explain? You know all better than I; you know that the music of the opera, and A— in the *barcaccia*, produced a charming effect upon me, and you must know, also, the power of music. It was an amusement, but it was not love.

When, then, shall I love? I am going again to amuse myself; to scatter, on all sides, the superabundant affection of my heart; again to become enthusiastic; again to weep—and for people who are nothing!

Saturday, September 9th (*August 28th*).—The days pass, and I am losing precious time in the best years of my life. Evenings spent at home, jests, and a gaiety of which I am the whole head and front; then going up and coming down in an arm-chair made by Michel and the other. I look at my shoes in the glass, as I come down—every day like that.

What weariness! Not a bright word! Not a cultivated sentence! I, unfortunately, am a pedant, and like to talk of the ancients and the sciences. Find anything of that sort here, if you can! Cards, and nothing else. I would shut myself up and read; but, my object being to make myself loved, that would be a strange way to attain it.

Once settled for the winter, I will begin to study as before.

In the evening, Paul had some difficulty with a servant. My father encouraged the servant. I *reprimanded* (that is the word) my father, who *swallowed* the reprimand. That is not a

Digitized by Google

very nice way of putting it; it is slang, and my journal is full of it. I beg you will believe that I am not vulgar through ignorance and innate vulgarity. I have adopted a way of writing, to make things concise and easily understood.

Well, there was discontent in the air; I was angry, and in my voice were heard trembling notes, which presaged a storm.

Paul does not know how to behave himself; and I can see that my mother was *right*, to be unhappy about him.

Sunday, September 10th (August 29th).—My Majesty (myself), my father, my brother, and my two cousins, came to Poltava to-day.

I am pleased with myself; they yield to me, flatter me, and, above all, love me. My father, who, in the beginning, wished to dethrone me, now almost completely understands why I should be accorded sovereign honors, and, leaving out a certain puerile asperity of his character, accords them to me.

This dry man, unused to any family sentiment, shows me, at times, a paternal affection, which astonishes all those about him. Paul has, in consequence, conceived a double respect for me; and, as I am pleasant to everybody, everybody likes me.

"You have changed so much, since I have seen you," said my father to-day.

"How?"

"Why—humph!—that is to say, if you could rid yourself of a certain insignificant brusqueness (which, besides, I have also), you would be perfection and a real treasure."

That means—well, only those who know the man can appreciate all the words mean.

And this evening, again, he put his arms about me, and, tenderly kissing me (an unheard-of thing, according to Paul), he said:

"See, Michel—see, all—what a daughter I have! There is a girl who deserves to be loved!"

"Do I not, papa? I am a treasure, Michel," I added, "and

Digitized by Google

I promise to let you marry my daughter; think of the honor; she may, perhaps, be a princess of the blood royal."

I write from Poltava. It has rained since early morning; and, when we were forced to climb that Satanic mountain, which was in about the middle of our journey, the horses almost refused to proceed. My father mounted upon the box, and the coachman descended and ran along in the mud, whipping the horses to set them galloping, and not give them time to think of the difficulty. The cracking of the whip; the cries of the footman, the coachman, and papa; the mute astonishment of Chocolate—all formed an exciting spectacle. It reminded me of the finish of a closely contested race.

We reached the city at 8 o'clock, and drove straight to the prince's house. The prince, himself, left this morning at 5, to prepare his house for our reception. It is a small house, very simple on the outside, but charming within. Nothing is finished yet; but the carpets are down, and the lamps, mirrors, beds, and a stock of wines have been purchased, and are in place.

In all Russian houses, there is, next to the antechamber, a hall; the hall here is all white; then there is a charming, dark-red *salon*, and a sleeping-room for me, full of all pretty and necessary articles. At every step, I am confronted with delicate attentions. Fancy! I found upon my dressing-table, powder and rouge!

But arranging all this, occupied the time until 7 o'clock, and when 7 o'clock came, just before our arrival, they discovered that there was nothing to eat. When we reached the house, Michel pretended not to have expected us, fibbed very awkwardly, and, pitilessly laughed at by us, remained in a state of confusion during the dinner, which was brought from the club about 10 o'clock. Some beautiful silver goblets led me into temptation. I drank two glasses of wine, which flushed my face slightly, and singularly loosened my tongue, just enough to make me animated. Still, I have been gay all day.

Digitized by Google

My father's plans have gone astray; all those whom he wished me to meet are in the country.

When Michel left us alone, we spoke of Gritz's folly.

"How stupid he is!" I exclaimed. "Now, now, listen, father and brother, both of you. Did you really think, with my ideas, with all I have seen and read, that I would marry Monsieur M—?"

"Humph!" said my father. "Yes, he is certainly stupid."

And he looked at me, not knowing whether he ought to appear disdainful or to speak his real thoughts, which surely were: "M— is a desirable match—even for you."

And now let us retire to the bed made by the prince himself.

"*Le ha fatto il letto!*" Amalia exclaimed, "*Un principe! Dio! Lei è propio una regina!*"

I was just now startled by piercing cries. It was Amalia who was screaming, because Paul had opened the window of the gallery and was looking at her as she took her bath. What a boy! Pacha and the prince have gone to sleep long ago.

I have scarcely room for my writing materials; the table is so crowded with bottles, vials, powder-boxes, brushes, sachets, etc.

Delighted over my success with my father, I write privately to myself: Those who do not love me are brutes, and those who love me *badly* are criminals!

Tuesday, September 12th (*August 31st*).—A day at Poltava! It is marvelous. Not knowing what to do, my father took me on foot through the city, and we saw Peter the Great's column, which is in the middle of the gardens.

Monday, at midnight, we left Poltava; and to-day, Tuesday, we are in Kharkoff. The journey was a pleasant one; we engaged a whole carriage.

I was awakened near Kharkoff by a bouquet from Prince Michel.

Digitized by Google

Kharkoff is a large town lighted by gas. The hotel where we are is called the Grand Hotel and justifies its name. Kept by Andrieux, the house offers every comfort; moreover, it is here that the gilded youth of the district sup, breakfast, dine, get tipsy, and fraternize with the innkeeper, who, in spite of that, never forgets his position, which astonishes me. Queer manners they have here!

I had my hair dressed by Louis, a French hairdresser.

Then tea and spiced bread.

Oh, yes, I visited a menagerie and the poor caged beasts made me sad.

I met my Uncle Nicholas, the youngest of the family, who pretends to study medicine. My poor uncle and I long ago used to play with dolls together, and I used to beat him and box his ears.

I kissed him, ready to burst into tears: "Between us, there must be no ceremony," I said, "Papa does not like you, but I love you with all my heart. I am still the same, only a little taller, that is all. Dear Uncle Nicholas, I can not ask you to breakfast; I am not alone and there are all sorts of strange people here, but come and see me to-morrow, surely."

I entered our private dining-room in a high state of excitement.

"There is nothing to worry about," said my father. "You could have invited him if you wished to, but I should have found some good excuse to be absent."

"Father, you are not kind to-day, and it is useless to speak of it any further. Enough!"

My father was abashed before my dry bitterness, and no more was said.

Thursday, September 14th (*September 2d*).—They were speaking of Pacha's departure, while he came and went changing the guns, for, like Nimrod, he is a mighty hunter before the Lord. My father asked him to remain; but he is so obstinate that when he has once said no, he would not change for the world.

Digitized by Google

I have named him, because of the freshness of his ideas, "The Innocent."* I can say, without ceremony, because I am sure of it, that "The Innocent" thinks everything in the world of me.

I begged him to remain.

"Don't ask me to do so, I implore you, for I can not grant your request."

I insisted, but in vain. I should not have been sorry to have kept him, especially because I knew that it was well-nigh impossible.

At the station, we were met by Lola, her mother, and Uncle Nicholas, who had come to see me off.

There was an enormous crowd to see the departure of fifty-seven volunteers for Servia. I walked all about the station with Paul, or Lola, or Michel, or Pacha, in fact, with each in his turn.

"Really, Pacha is very unkind," said Lola, when I told her of his obstinacy.

Then, with an effort not to laugh, I approached "The Innocent" and made him a little speech, very dry and very offended, and then, as there were tears in his eyes and as I was longing to laugh, I retired in order not to spoil the effect I had produced.

One could scarcely move about, and it was with great difficulty that we reached our car.

The crowd amused me and I looked out of the window. They jostled and pushed each other with all sorts of cries. Suddenly, I was startled by hearing a chorus of boys' voices, purer and sweeter than a woman's. They were singing a church hymn, and it seemed like a choir of angels.

They were the archbishop's singers, and they were chanting a prayer for the volunteers. Everyone uncovered, and the divine harmony, and the beautiful voices took away my breath. When they had finished, and I saw everybody waving their

* *L'homme vert.*

Digitized by Google

hats and their handkerchiefs, with my eyes shining with enthusiasm and my breast filled with emotion, I could do nothing else than scream "Hurrah!" with the rest, and laugh and cry.

The noise lasted for some time, and did not cease until the same choir intoned the Russian hymn, "*Boje, zaria chrani.*" But the prayers for the Emperor seemed insignificant after the prayer for those who were going to die in defense of their brothers.

And the Emperor allows the Turks to act like this! Heavens!

The train started amidst frantic hurrahs. Then I turned and saw Michel laughing, and heard my father say *Dourak!* instead of *Hurrah!*

"Papa! Michel! Is it possible? What are you made of?"

"Won't you say good-bye to me?" asked Pacha, very red and awkward.

The train was moving.

"*Au revoir*, Pacha!" I said, holding out my hand, which he seized and kissed, without saying a word.

Michel was jealous. I saw him looking at me for some time, then he threw his hat on the floor, and rose in a fury. I laughed.

Here I am again in Poltava, that detestable city. Kharkoff I knew better, I passed a year there before I went to Vienna. I remembered all the streets and all the shops. This afternoon, at the station, I recognized the doctor who took care of grandmamma, and I spoke to him.

He was astonished to see me so tall, although Uncle Nicholas had already told him about me. I long to return to the South. "Knowest thou the land where the orange tree blooms?" Not Nice, but Italy.

Friday, September 15th (*September 3d*).—This morning Paul brought me little Etienne, Uncle Alexander's son. I did not recognize him at first. I paid no attention to the more or less pleasure that the sight of a Babanine causes father, but I devoted myself to the pretty little boy.

Digitized by Google

At last father has taken me to call upon the notables of Poltava.

First, we went to the prefect's. The prefect's wife is a woman of the world, and, really, very amiable. I liked the prefect also. He had a "committee" with him, but he came to the *salon* and told my father that there was no committee which could make him lose the opportunity of seeing so charming a young lady.

The prefect's wife conducted us to the door herself, and we resumed the search for people that it was proper for me to meet.

We went to the vice-governor's, to the directress of the Institute for Noble Young Ladies, and to Madame Volkovitsky's (Kotchoubey's daughter); the latter is very well bred. Then I took a cab and went to see Uncle Alexander, who is here at the hotel with his wife and children.

Ah, how good it is to be among one's own people! You fear neither criticism nor injustice. Perhaps my father's family seems to me cold and unpleasant, through contrast with ours, which is extraordinarily loving and united.

Talking business, love, and scandal, I passed two hours very agreeably; but, at the end of this time, messages began to arrive from my father, and, as I replied that I was not ready to go yet, he came himself, and I tormented him for more than half an hour, loitering, seeking for pins, my handkerchief, etc.

At last we left, and when I thought that he was a little calmed down, I said:

"We have been very impolite."

"Why?"

"Because we have been to see everybody except Madame M—, who knows mamma and who knew me as a child."

And then we had a long discussion, which ended in a refusal to go there.

When the prefect asked me how long I was going to remain with my father, I said that I hoped to carry him back with me.

Digitized by Google

"Did you hear what the prefect said when you said that you wanted to carry me back with you?" asked the illustrious author of my days.

"No, what?"

"He said that, being marshal of the nobility, I would have to obtain permission from the minister."

"Well, ask it at once, so that nothing need detain us here too long."

"Very well."

"Then you will go with me?"

"Yes."

"Are you speaking seriously?"

"Yes."

It was past 8 o'clock, and the darkness of the carriage permitted me to say anything without my face betraying me.

Saturday, September 16th (4th).—I continue to be contented; the flatteries of the governor and his wife have increased my father's esteem for me.

The effect that I produce flatters him, and, in fact, I am not angry myself when anyone says: "You know Bashkirtseff's daughter is a great beauty." (The poor imbeciles, they have never seen anything.)

Gavronzi, Sunday, September 17th.—While waiting for my future celebrity, I went to a hunt in masculine attire, with a game-bag slung over my shoulders. We set out, my father, Paul, the prince, and I in a *char-a-banc.*

Now, I can not find a word to describe the excursion, for I do not know the name of—well, in fact, everything appertaining to the chase. The brambles, the reeds, the shrubs, the trees were all so thick that we could scarcely make our way through them, the air was delightfully pure, there was no sun, and a light rain which delighted the hunters, who were warm. We walked, walked, walked.

I made the tour of a small lake, my gun loaded and ready to fire, hoping every moment to see a duck rise; but nothing!

Digitized by Google

I was beginning to wonder if I should not fire at the lizards, which were crawling about my feet, or at Michel, who walked behind me, and who, I felt, had his eyes impudently fixed upon me in my masculine attire.

I found the happy medium—that happy medium which is never found in France—and shot a crow that had perched on the top of an oak, suspecting nothing, all the more so as his attention was distracted by my father and Michel, who had thrown themselves on the ground in the middle of a clearing.

I pulled out his tail-feathers and made myself an aigrette.

The others did not fire once, they only walked.

Paul killed a thrush, and that was the whole hunt.

A mother, who thinks her child is dead, and dead by her own fault, who is not certain of its death, and who does not dare to inquire lest her fears may be confirmed—that mother suddenly finds again that child who has caused her so much anguish, who has made her doubt and suffer so much. Ah, that mother must be happy! It seems to me that that is almost what I experience in recovering my voice.

After laughing heartily in the *salon*, I stopped a moment, and suddenly I could sing.

I owe this to Doctor Walitzky's remedy.

Tuesday, September 19th.—I am wearied with hearing slighting allusions to my family, which I can not resent. I could have closed my father's mouth, if I had not been afraid to lose my means to an end. He is good to me, and I am willing to acknowledge it. How could one be otherwise to a bright, educated, agreeable, sweet, and good girl (for I am all that here, and he says it himself), who asks nothing of him, who has come to pay him a visit of courtesy, and who gratifies his vanity under all aspects?

When I entered my room, I longed to throw myself on the floor and cry, but I restrained myself, and the feeling passed away. That is what I shall always do. I must not give people who are indifferent to me the power of making me suffer.

Digitized by Google

When I suffer I am humiliated; it disgusts me to think that such or such an one has been able to make me suffer.

Well, in spite of all, life is the best thing in the world.

Friday, September 22d.—I have certainly had enough of it. The country stuns me—paralyzes my intellect. I have told my father so, and, as if I had told him that I wished to marry a king, he began to show me how foolish it was, and to criticise my family again. I did not agree with what he said. (One may say certain things, but one does not care to hear them said.)

I told him that the reflections on my family were all the result of Madame T—'s falsehoods. I have not yielded to my good aunt, and I have employed the best means to shake her influence.

Oh, Rome! the Pincio, which rises up like an island from the plain, broken here and there by aqueducts; the Porta del Popolo; the obelisk; the churches of Cardinal Gastolo, which are on each side of the Corso; the Corso itself; the palace of the Venetian Republic—those narrow, sombre streets; those palaces blackened by centuries—the ruins of a little temple to Minerva, and finally the Coliseum! It seems to me as if I could see it all now. I close my eyes and I walk through the city, I visit the ruins, I see—I am not one of those who say: "Out of sight, out of mind." Scarcely has an object disappeared from my sight than it acquires a double value. I think of it in all its details, I admire it, I love it.

I have traveled much and seen many cities, but two only have excited my enthusiasm to the highest pitch.

The first was Baden-Baden, where I passed two summers when a child; I can still remember the lovely gardens. The other was Rome. Rome made a very different impression upon me; but stronger, if possible.

It is the same way with Rome as it is with certain persons whom one does not like at first, but for whom love increases little by little. This is the way lasting affections are formed, which are very sweet without the anguish of passion.

Digitized by Google

I love Rome—nothing but Rome.

And St. Peter's! St. Peter's, when a ray of light, penetrating through the roof, falls upon the floor and forms shadows and luminous tracks there as regular as the architecture of its columns and its altars—a ray of the sun, that, by the aid of shadows only, has erected in this temple of marble a temple of light.

With my eyes closed, I transport myself to Rome, and it is night; and to-morrow will come the *hippopotami* from Poltava. I must be pretty. I will be so.

The country has done me enormous good; my complexion has never been so fresh and transparent.

Rome! and I shall not go to Rome! Why not? Because I don't wish to. If you knew what that resolution has cost me, you would pity me. Wait! my tears are falling.

Sunday, September 24th, 1876.—It is beginning to be cold, and it was with a feeling of profound disgust that I was aroused at 7 o'clock; at 8, I tried to gain a few minutes more, and at 9, I was in the *salon*, my black-velvet cap on my head, and my habit caught up so as to show my embroidered boots.

The hunters were all there: Kamenski, a Porthos in appearance; Volkovitski, a fury from *Iphigenia in Tauris;* Pavelka, a frightful lawyer; Salko, a wretched architect; Schwabé, the owner of seventeen hounds; Lioubowitch, a *Tchinovnik*, almost as enormous as Kamenski; a man whose name I do not know; my father; Michel, and Paul.

They all examined the guns, discussing the cartridges, taking tea, and exchanging stupid and vulgar witticisms. I do not include in this my father and our own two young men.

I rode with my father and our two guns; four carriages followed us closely.

Do you know how a wolf-hunt is conducted in Russia? To begin with, excuse my blunders on the subject of sport, for I really know nothing about it. This is how it is arranged:

The hunt is announced in the district a week ahead, through

Digitized by Google

the *starosta* or bailiff, so that he may collect the necessary number of men; but, on account of a fair at Poltava, only 120 came from there. Altogether, there were 200 men present, and nets were stretched over a line extending four to six miles. Prince Kotchoubey, who could not come himself, sent his nets.

I shivered. My father placed us all, in no particular order, on each side of the path. He counted us and then made two parties—those with guns and those without.

Among the peasants, about twenty had guns; to the rest, they distributed pikes—long poles with an iron *fleur de lis* in the end. Just as were in use by the ancient Gauls. These pikes are used in a cowardly way to kill such beasts as are caught in the net.

The nets are stretched in such a way that the beasts are caught in them after having run rapidly along the path on each side of which the hunters are ambushed.

It was time to begin. The Polish steward on horseback—wearing an oil-skin cap like a helmet and carrying a pike which, though he was on horseback, reached to the ground and above his head—galloped about and moved around without doing anything.

I arranged my gun, adjusted my game-bag, which contained a pocket-handkerchief and my gloves, coughed—and was ready.

Think of me alone in the midst of the forest, with a loaded and cocked gun in my hands, damp feet, and thoroughly cold. My steel heels sunk into the ground damped by yesterday's rain which increased the cold and made walking difficult.

What think you that I did as soon as I was alone? Nothing extraordinary. I looked first for what was visible through the trees—sky, a gray and cold sky; then I looked around me. I saw tall trees already tinged by autumn. Finally, I noticed my father's cloak lying on the ground. I stretched myself on it and began to think. Just then I felt something warm beside me. I turned. Heavens! three animals, both tame and

Digitized by Google

caressing—our large black dog and the two little black dogs: Jonk I. and Jonk II.

At last I heard a shot—the signal—and then the cries of the peasants, though still far away. As they came nearer, my dreaminess disappeared, and when they were near enough to raise in me the feelings which the cries of a crowd always cause, even when they laugh, I rose, seized my gun, and listened. Their shouts came nearer, until I heard the blows with which they were striking the bushes to make the noise greater.

I seemed every instant to hear the bushes breaking, for the wolves prefer the thicker brush.

They were shouting louder and louder, and when the first men appeared, my heart jumped. I believe that I trembled for a moment; but the men drove nothing before them—the nets were empty. After inspecting them, nothing was found but a poor hare, which the giant Kamenski killed with a kick—the abominable brute!

Compliments went round about the poor luck, and we went gaily to the open plain, where, behind a heap of straw or hay, it was arranged to take a meal of salt meat and drink brandy. The peasants were feasted on roast sheep, pies, and brandy. This is natural in Russia, and seems to them magnificent.

Those honest animals!—shall I call them men?—examined with curiosity this creature, a little more woman than man, who carried a gun and smiled at them freely. My father discussed horses with them. I think he talked Servian politics.

After resting, we took to the thick woods again; but since, instead of the wolf, we hunted hares, it was necessary to walk continuously, following the twenty-nine dogs, and their keeper, which Prince Kotchoubey sent yesterday.

The sun came out, and I should have felt gay, if fatigue had not taken the place of the dampness. After two hours' walking, we had not seen even a hare's tail. This made me impatient, and finding our carriage, I returned with my father to the paternal roof.

Digitized by Google

I took a perfumed bath, dressed myself, and went down to meet the others, who had brought in three hares.

I was adorably pretty (that is to say, so far as I can be pretty); but it was useless; none of these monsters resemble a man.

With the peasants I am talkative and familiar, with those who are my equals in education I am agreeable enough, I think; but what was I to do with these rustics? To avoid talking to them, I gambled and lost 100 francs to the giant.

They started gambling again and I went to the library to write a letter to a horse-dealer at St. Petersburg. Of course the prince followed me, and after having asked to be allowed to kiss my hand, which I permitted without showing too much disgust, the little fellow looked at me, sighed, and asked my age.

"Sixteen."

"Well, when you are twenty-five, I will ask you to marry me."

"That is charming!" I said.

"And then you will repulse me as you have to-day."

This brilliant day ended with a concert on the stairs. My voice—that is, one-half of it—delighted them, but I believe that they admire without understanding anything.

Monday, September 25th.—My father took me to the gallery to see a peasant wedding-party, which had come to salute us. The marriage took place yesterday. The husband wore the usual costume—black boots to the knees, large trousers of a dark color, and a *swita* (a sort of cloak, folded from the waist) of a natural maroon cloth, woven by the country women; an embroidered shirt, of which the front is visible, and a colored ribbon, instead of flowers, in the button-hole.

His wife wore a skirt and jacket shaped like a man's, but of material of a quieter shade of color. Her head, instead of being dressed with flowers and ribbons, like the girls' heads, was wrapped up in a silk handkerchief, which hid her hair and forehead without covering her ears and neck.

Digitized by Google

They came into the room, followed by the best men and bridesmaids, and by those who had negotiated the marriage.

Husband and wife knelt three times to my father.

Wednesday, September 27th.—I had a laughing conversation with my father, which gave me a chance to say anything. He was hurt by my last words the day before yesterday.

He complains; says that he has led a life of folly; that he has simply amused himself, but that he finds something wanting; that he is not happy.

"With whom are you in love?" I asked, laughing at his sighs.

"Do you wish to know?"

Here he blushed so strongly that he put his arms up to hide his face.

"Yes, tell me."

"With mamma."

His voice trembled so, that I had to laugh to hide my emotion.

"I knew that you would not understand me," said he.

"Excuse me; but this matrimonially romantic passion is so little like you."

"Because you mistake me. But I swear it. I swear to you it is true. Before this portrait of my grandmother, before this crucifix, the blessed gift of my father," and he crossed himself before the picture and the cross hanging above the bed.

"Perhaps," he continued, "it is because I always imagine myself young as formerly, because I live in the memory of the past. When we were separated, I went almost mad. I walked as a pilgrim, to pray to the Virgin of Ahtirna; but they say that this Virgin brings misfortune, and it is true, for things became more and more entangled. And then, shall I tell you? You will laugh. When you lived at Kharkoff, I went there, alone, in disguise. I took a carriage, and watched your rooms. I stayed a day to see her pass, and then returned, without having been detected."

Digitized by Google

"If that were true, it would be very affecting," I said.

"Now, tell me. Since we are speaking of your mamma—has she—has she an aversion for me?"

"Aversion! Why? Certainly not—none at all."

"Because, sometimes one has insurmountable antipathies."

"Not at all, I assure you."

Then we talked it over, at length.

I spoke of her, as of a saint, which she is, and has been to me, ever since I can remember anything.

It was late; I was sleepy—at home I should have supped, written, and read.

At 8 this morning, we were just starting for Poltava, when Mme. Hélène K—, mother of Pacha, arrived. She is an amiable hunchback, a little affected. We took tea together, and then started. My father has been called there to preside.

It was cold, and it rained every now and then. I took a walk, and then we went to a photographer. I posed as a peasant standing, sitting, and lying down—asleep.

We met G—.

"You have met my daughter?" asked my father.

"Yes, Monsieur, I have met her."

"You can not meet a finer girl, can you? And there is no finer, and never has been."

"I beg your pardon, sir, there were such in the time of Olympus."

"You pay compliments, I see, Monsieur G—."

The gentleman is rather plain, rather dark, rather respectable, passably polite, an adventurer, a gambler, and fairly honorable. At Poltava he is looked on as most cultivated and polished.

The first cold of the winter compelled me to put on my furs. Shut up, as they have been, they keep the odor they had in Rome—and ah! this odor! these furs!

Did you ever notice how a perfume, a tune, a color can carry you to any place? To pass a winter in Paris? Oh, no!

Digitized by Google

Thursday, September 28th.— I weep from *ennui*. I want to go away. I am unhappy here. I lose my time, my life. I am miserable. I rust. I suffer. I am ill-tempered—that is the truth!

This life is distressing to me. Oh, God! oh, Jesus! take me away from it!

Friday, September 29th.—I was so desperate yesterday. It seemed to me that I was forever chained to Russia and it exasperated me. I was ready to climb over the wall, and I wept bitterly.

Pacha's mother annoys me. Why? Because she has said many things, by which I see in what high terms her son has spoken of me. Finally, when I begged her to let him come, she said, half-laughingly, half-seriously:

"No! no! he must stay away; you are unhappy here, and, having nothing better to do, will torment him. He came back to me, quite crushed and stupefied."

To which I replied, with perfect candor:

"I do not think that Pacha will be offended with my friendly pleasantry. If I laugh and tease him a little, it is because he is my near relation—almost my brother."

She looked at me a long time, and said:

"Do you know what is the height of folly?"

"No."

"To fall in love with Moussia."

Instinctively connecting this phrase with many others, I blushed to my ears.

Sunday, October 1st.—We have called on Prince Serge Kotchoubey.

My father dressed himself specially, so much so that he wore gloves of too light a color.

I wore white, as at the races at Naples, only I had a hat covered with black feathers of the classic fashionable Russian shape, which I do not like, but which was appropriate.

The prince's country house is six miles from Gavronzi, it is

Digitized by Google

the famous Dikanka sung of by Poushkine when he tells of the loves of Mazeppa and Marie Kotchoubey.

The property was specially improved by Prince Victor Pavlovitch Kotchoubey, Grand Chancelor of the Empire, a remarkable statesman, father of the present prince.

Dikanka, for the beauty of its garden, park, and buildings is the rival of the Borghese and Doria villas at Rome. Excepting the inimitable antiquities, Dikanka is perhaps richer; it is almost a town.

I do not speak of the peasant homes, only of the house itself and its surroundings. I am astonished to find such a residence in the middle of Little Russia. What a pity no one knows of its existence! There are many courts, stables, factories, machines, and work-shops, for the prince has a mania for building, manufacturing, and ornamenting. But, once the door of the house is open, all resemblance to Italy vanishes.

The hall is ridiculously small, and one only sees a fine nobleman's house; but none of the splendor, majesty, and divine art which ravish the soul in the Italian palaces.

The prince is from fifty to fifty-five years old, a widower for the last ten years, I believe. He is the type of the Russian nobleman, one of those men of times gone by, whom the world begins to consider of another species than our own.

His manners and conversation at first confused me, so stupid have I become; but after five minutes, I felt very contented.

Offering his arm, he took me to the principal pictures and through the rooms. The dining-room is magnificent. I sat in the place of honor on the right, the prince and my father on the left.

Farther away sat many persons who were not presented to me and who humbly took their places—the tenants of the Middle Ages.

All was going ravishingly, when I felt ill, my head swam, I rose from the table; fortunately, the meal was over.

I entered the Moorish room, sat down, and almost fainted.

Digitized by Google

They showed me the pictures and statuettes, the portrait of Prince Basile and his bloody shirt hanging in a closet of which the picture is the door. I was taken to see the horses, but could see nothing. Then we left.

Saturday, October 14th.—I have received some gowns from Paris. I dressed and went out with Paul.

Poltava is a more interesting town than people think. The first remarkable thing is the little church of Peter the Great; it is wooden, and to preserve it a brick casing has been built. Between this casing and the walls of the church, a man can pass.

Right beside the church is a column, erected in the very place where, after having gained the battle of ———, June, 1709, the Emperor deigned to rest himself, seated on a stone. The column is in bronze.

I entered the old wooden church, knelt, and touched the floor three times with my forehead. It is said that by doing this the first time one enters any church, whatever one wishes will be brought about.

Following up my curiosity-hunting, I went to see the great convent of Poltava.

It is on top of the second hill. Poltava is on two hills.

There is nothing remarkable there but the altar-stand, which is in wonderfully carved wood.

It is there that my ancestor, the father of Grandpapa Babanine, is buried. I made a bow to his tomb.

Tuesday, October 17th.—We played croquet.

"Pacha, what would you do to any one who had offended, cruelly offended me?"

"I would kill him," he answered, simply.

"You have fine words on your tongue, Pacha; but you are laughing."

"And you?"

They call me the devil, the hurricane, the demon, the storm. . . . I am all these since yesterday.

Digitized by Google

When I became calmer, I propounded the most diverse views on love.

My cousin has ideally broad thoughts, and Dante might have borrowed from him his divine love for Beatrice.

"I shall no doubt be in love," said he, "but I shall never marry."

"What is that, you innocent? We whip young people who talk like that."

"Because—" he continued, "I should wish my love to last forever, at least in imagination preserving its divine purity and strength. Marriage extinguishes love just as it inspires it."

I laughed.

"Very good," said his mother, whilst the terrible orator blushed and shrank back confused by his own words.

All this time I was looking in the mirror and cutting my hair, which was too long over the forehead.

"Take this," I said to "The Innocent," throwing him a tuft of golden-red threads. "I give them to you as a souvenir."

He not only took them, but his voice and glance trembled, and when I wanted to take them back, he looked at me strangely, like a child who has received a toy which he thinks a treasure.

I gave my cousin "Corinne" to read, after this he left the house.

Corinne and *Lord Melvil* were walking across the bridge of St. Angelo. "Crossing this bridge" says *Lord Melvil*, "on my return from the Capitol, I first dared think of you." There is nothing particular in this sentence—but, last night, it had a strange effect on me. Moreover, I feel it every time I open the book.

Has anyone ever said anything like this to me?

There is something magical in these words, simple as they seem. Is it then simplicity? Perhaps it is an association of ideas.

Friday, October 20th.—By 8 in the gray of the morning, with the earth lightly powdered with snow, like Madame B—'s

Digitized by Google

face, we were hunting. Michel brought his pack of grey-hounds. As soon as we were in the fields, I mounted my horse without taking off my cloak which I fastened round my waist with a belt. I had three dogs to lead.

The frost, the snow, the horses, and the delicate heads of the hounds filled me with delight. I felt triumphant.

Pacha, also riding, was very amiable, which suits him badly and disturbs me. However, no—his changeable temper is not to be disdained.

"Pacha, there is a person who annoys me horribly (reassure yourself, it is not Aunt T—) and I should like to exterminate this person in a polite way."

"Good, use me!"

"Truly?"

"Try it!"

"On your word of honor, you will not speak of it?"

"On my word of honor."

Owing to those few words, there is now a sort of alliance between me and "The Innocent."

We have to speak softly, in English, whenever his mother is away.

Pacha wished to continue his love-making. I gave him my two fingers to kiss, and lent him some poetry of Victor Hugo. I treat him like a brother, which he is.

Monday, October 23d.—Yesterday, we packed ourselves in a coupé with six horses, and started for Poltava.

The trip was pleasant. The tears that fell on leaving the paternal roof brought about general emotion, and Pacha exclaimed that he was madly in love.

"I swear it is true," he cried; "but I will not say with whom!"

"If you are not in love with me," I cried, "I detest you!"

My feet were cold, he took off his cloak and wrapped them in it.

"Pacha, swear to tell me the truth!"

"I swear it."

Digitized by Google

"With whom are you in love?"

"Why?"

"It interests me; we are relations, I am curious and—and—it amuses me."

"You see, it amuses you."

"Of course, but do not take offense. I am interested in you, and you are a brave lad."

"You see how you are laughing, and you will make fun of me afterward."

"With whom are you in love?"

"With you!"

"Truly?"

"On my honor. I never speak as they do in novels. Do you want me to fall on my knees and talk a lot of nonsense?"

"My dear friend, you are imitating someone I know."

"As you please, Moussia; but I am telling the truth."

"But it is folly."

"Possibly, but it pleases me. It is a hopeless love, just what I required. I wanted to suffer, to be tormented, and then, when she has gone away, I shall have something to dream of, something to regret. I shall feel myself a martyr, it will be happiness."

"Innocent!"

"Innocent? Why 'Innocent?'"

"But we are brother and sister."

"No. Cousins."

"It is the same thing."

"Oh, no!"

Then I began to tease my lover. Always the one I do not want!

I set out with Paul, sending Pacha back to Gavronzi. At the station we met Count M—, and he politely gave me the assistance I required in the cars.

They woke me at the third station, and as I passed in front of the count whom I believed asleep, I heard him say: "I kept awake specially to see you pass."

Digitized by Google

They were waiting for me at Tchermakovka, but I retired at once, thoroughly tired.

My uncles Etienne and Alexander, with their wives and children, came to see me in bed.

I will return to my own friends. I am no sooner here than I feel better, there I shall be at rest.

I have seen my nurse Martha.

Tuesday, October 24th.—I had no childhood; but the house in which I grew up is dear to me and awakens my emotions. I know everybody and everything. Our servants, from father to son, growing old in our employ, look astonished to see me so grown, and I should enjoy some sweet memories, were not my mind poisoned by tormenting thoughts.

They called me Mouche, Mouka, and as I could not aspirate the Russian *h*, I called myself with a French pronunciation, Moucha, which means martyrdom. A mournful coincidence.

I dreamed of A— for the first time since I left Nice.

Dominica and her daughter came in the evening, after receiving my letter written this morning. We stayed a long while in the dining-room which communicates with the sitting-room by an undraped arch.

My Agrippina dress was a great success. I sang, walking up and down to master the timidity I always feel when I sing.

Why should I write? What have I to tell? I must bore people terribly. Ah, have patience!

Sextus V. was only a swine-herd, and Sextus V. became Pope.

I will begin again.

With Lola, there seemed to come a breath of Rome. We seemed to be returning from the opera or the Pincio.

My grandfather's library gives a wide choice of rare and curious books. I selected some to read with Lola.

Thursday, October 26th.—Blessed be the railroad! We are at Kharkoff, in the house of the famous host Andrieux; we came

Digitized by Google

on horses thirty years old—grandpapa's horses. Our departure was as brilliant as a display of fireworks; we were full of simple and honest fun. I can breathe freely among people who wish me only happiness.

My anger has passed away, and again I dream of Pietro. At the theatre, I did not listen to the play, but dreamed; but then I am at an age when any subject offers food for dreams.

Shall I go to Rome or shall I work in Paris?

Russia, as circumstances make it for me, is heart-breaking. My father has telegraphed for me.

Friday, October 27th.—Returning from Tcherniakow to our old nest, I found a letter from my father; and all the evening, Uncle Alexander and his wife advised me to induce my father to take me to Rome.

"You can do it," said Nadine; "succeed and it will be a true pleasure."

I answered in monosyllables, for I had promised myself to speak of it to no one.

In my room I have unhung all the images covered with gold and silver. I will place them in my oratory *in the South.*

Sunday, October 29th (*17th*).—I have unhung the pictures as I did the images. They say one of them is a Veronese and one a Dolci; but I shall know at Nice. Once started, I wanted to carry off everything. Uncle Alexander seemed displeased; but the first step alone was difficult. Once started, I did what I pleased.

Nadine is the protectress of the neighboring schools. She has, with wonderful energy, undertaken the work of civilizing our peasants.

I went out this morning with Nadine, to see her school, and afterward tired myself in looking out old clothes and giving them away right and left. Crowds of women who had been in service or lived near the house came for them. I was obliged to give.

Probably, I shall never see Tcherniakow again. I wan-

Digitized by Google

dered around from room to room for a long time, and it was very sweet to me. We laugh at people who find memories and charms in furniture and pictures; who bid them good-day, good-bye; who find friends in fragments of wood and stuffs, which, from having been of service and having been under one's eyes, enter into one's life and become a part of one's existence.

Laugh on! The most refined sentiments are the most easily ridiculed. Where mockery reigns, the highest delicacy of sentiment is banished.

Wednesday, November 1st.—When Paul went out, I was alone with that honest and admirable creature—Pacha.

"Do I still please you?"

"Ah, Moussia, what do you wish me to say?"

"Speak, simply. Why do you hide anything? Why not be simple and frank? I will not make fun of you. If I laugh it will be from nervousness and nothing else. Then I no longer please you?"

"Why?"

"Well, because— but I can not say."

"It is impossible for me to understand you."

"If I do not please you, you can say so; you can be candid enough for that, and I am quite indifferent. Come now, does my nose, or my eyes displease you?"

"It is evident that you have never loved."

"Why?"

"Because, the moment you analyze the features—whether the nose is finer than the eyes, or the eyes than the mouth, that proves that love exists no longer."

"That is quite true. Who told you that?"

"No one."

"Did Ulysses tell you?"

"No," he replied, "I can not tell what charms me. I will tell you candidly: Your carriage, your manner, and, above all, your character."

Digitized by Google

"Is it good?"

"Yes, unless you are acting a part, which can not always be the case."

"True again, and my face?"

"It has beauties that may be called classic."

"I know it. Anything else?"

"Anything else? There are pretty women who pass by and one thinks no more of them; but there are faces which are both pretty and charming—and which leave a strong impression, an agreeable, charming emotion."

"Perfect! and then?"

"How you question me!"

"I am taking advantage of a chance to know a little what people think of me. I shall not soon meet another person whom I can question like this without compromising myself. And how did you get the idea? Did it come on you suddenly, or little by little?"

"Little by little."

"Humph!"

"That is the best way; it's the most solid. What we love in a day, we cease to love the next, while—"

"You are poetical—this will last forever?"

"Yes, forever!"

Our talk lasted long and I began to have considerable respect for this man whose love is respectful as a religion, and who has never defiled it by a profane word or look.

"Do you like talking of love?" I asked him, suddenly.

"No; to speak of it carelessly is a profanation."

"Still it is amusing."

"Amusing!" he cried.

"Ah, Pacha, life is one long misery! Have I ever been in love?"

"Never," he answered.

"Why do you think so?"

"On account of your character, you can only love by

Digitized by Google

caprice. To-day, a man; to-morrow, a dress; the day after, a cat."

"I am delighted when people think that of me. And you, my dear brother, have you ever been in love?"

"I have told you over and over again; you know it."

"No, no, I do not speak of that, but before?"

"Never."

"That is strange. At times I think I am wrong and have taken you for what you are not."

We spoke of other things and I went to my room. What a man! No, I will not think too well of him, the disillusion would be too disagreeable. He told me just now he was going to be a soldier.

"To win glory, I tell you frankly."

This phrase, spoken from the bottom of his heart, half timid, half brave, caused me intense pleasure. I flatter myself, probably, but it seems to me that ambition was once foreign to him. I believe I can recall the strange effect which ambitious words had on him, and one day, while I spoke of ambition while painting, this half-grown man rose suddenly and paced the room, saying: "I must do some great thing! I must do something!"

Thursday, November 2d.—My father teases me about everything. A hundred times I make up my mind to give everything up; but I restrain myself, which causes me unspeakable pain.

Endless trouble was necessary to bring him to Poltava to-night. At the assembly of the nobility there was to be a concert with a piano quartet. I wished to go, to show myself, and I met with nothing but objections.

It is not enough that he has not procured the least pleasure for me, that he has driven away those who were possibly my equals, that he has been deaf to my insinuations and even to my requests about a wretched amateur performance! That is not enough! Now, after three months' coaxing and kind-

Digitized by Google

ness, three months' display of wit and amiability, I get—a strong objection to my going to this miserable concert! That is not all. I was able to arrange to go, but then came a dispute on the choice of my dress. He wanted me to wear a woolen dress—a walking dress. How small, how unworthy of intelligent beings!

I did not absolutely need my father, I had Nadine and Uncle Alexander, Paul and Pacha; but I made him go from caprice, and much to my discomfort.

My father thought me too fine and made more trouble. He feared that I should appear too different from the ladies of Poltava, and begged me this time to dress differently—he who had wished me to dress brilliantly at Kharkoff. The result was the destruction of a pair of gloves, furious eyes, an abominable temper, and—no change in my dress. We arrived when the concert was half over. I entered on my father's arm, upright and with the air of a woman sure of admiration. Nadine, Paul, and Pacha followed. I passed Madame Abaga without bowing, and we sat in the first seats beside her.

I called on Mademoiselle Dietrich, who, when she became Madame Abaga, did not return my call. I assumed an insolent assurance and did not notice her in spite of her glances. We were at once surrounded, and the idlers of the club, which is in the same building, came in to look on.

The concert was soon over, and we left, accompanied by several men on horseback.

"Did you bow to Madame Abaga?" my father asked me several times.

"No."

Thereupon I made quite a speech, advising him to despise others less and to examine himself more. I stung him to the quick, so much so that he returned to the club, but came back to tell me that Madame Abaga referred to all the servants in the hotel, declaring that she had returned my call, with her niece, the very next day.

Digitized by Google

My father was in good spirits. He had been much complimented about me.

Saturday, November 4th (*October 23d*).—I ought to have known that my father would seize any opportunity, great or small, to revenge himself on his wife. I had it vaguely in my mind, but I believed in the kindness of God. Mamma is not at fault; it is impossible to live with such a man. He has betrayed himself suddenly. I am now in a position to judge.

It has been snowing since the morning; the earth is white and the trees are covered with frost which produces deliciously vague coloring toward evening. It makes me long to sink into the grayish fog of the forest—it seems to be of another world.

But the pleasant rocking of the carriage, the delicious scent of the first snow, the indistinct light of evening, all these calming influences did not avail to diminish my indignation when I thought of A—, a memory which tracks me like a wild beast and allows me no tranquil moment.

In the country, we were scarcely in the drawing-room when my father began to make home thrusts, and, seeing that I remained silent, exclaimed:

"Your mother declares that I shall end my life in the country with her! Never!"

To reply would have meant leaving the house at once. Another sacrifice! I thought, and at least I shall have done everything possible. I can never blame myself. I remained sitting, and did not utter a word; but for a long time I shall recall that minute. My blood ceased to circulate and my heart stopped beating a moment, only to palpitate afterward like a dying bird.

I took my place at table, still silent and deliberate. My father recognized his error and began to find fault with everything, and to scold the servants excessively to make an excuse for being angry afterward.

Digitized by Google

Suddenly, he took a seat on the arm of my chair, and threw his arms around me. I freed myself at once.

"Oh, no," I said in a firm voice, which this time had lost all accent of fear. "I will not remain with you."

"Yes, oh yes you must."

And he tried to turn the matter into ridicule.

"It is I who should be angry," said he.

"Therefore, I do not allow myself to become so."

Tuesday, November 7th.—I have broken my mirror. Some death or great misfortune is to happen. This superstition freezes me, and I am still more frozen when I look out of the window. All is white under a pearly-gray sky. It is long since I have seen such a picture.

Paul, with the natural desire of youth to show new things to new people, prepared a little sleigh and triumphantly took me for a drive.

This sleigh has no right to the name; it is simply some miserable boughs nailed together and covered with hay and a carpet. The horse, harnessed too close, threw the snow in our faces and sleeves, in my shoes and in my eyes. An icy dust covered the triple—lace on my head and froze in the folds.

"You told me to go abroad at the same time as you," said Pacha, suddenly.

"I did, but not from caprice. You could do me a favor in coming, and you will not come. You do nothing for me; for whom will you do something?"

"Ah, you know well why I can not come!"

"Why?"

"You know. It is because in traveling with you, I should continue to see you, and that causes me intense suffering."

"Why that?"

"Because I love you."

"But, in coming, you could be of such use to me."

"I? Useful to you?"

"Yes."

Digitized by Google

"No; I can not come. I will look after you from afar. If you could only know," said he, in a low and touching tone, "if you could only know how I suffer sometimes! One must have my moral strength to appear always calm and the same."

"You will forget me."

"Never!"

"But then?"

My voice had lost all tinge of raillery. I was touched.

"Poor fellow!"

I stopped before saying more, feeling that my pity was an insult.

Why is it so delightful to hear the confession of sufferings which you, yourself, have caused? The more unhappy one is for love of you, the more happy you are.

"Come with us; my father does not wish to take Paul; come!"

"I—"

"You can not—we know it. I will not urge you."

I took an inquisitorial air like a person about to be amused at the confession of some folly.

"Then I have the honor to be your first love? Charming! I don't believe it!"

"Why? Because my voice does not tremble, and tears do not come into my eyes. I have a will of iron, that is all."

"And I, who wished to give you something, I—"

"What?"

I showed him a little image of the Virgin suspended at my neck by a white ribbon.

"Give it to me."

"You don't deserve it."

"Ah, Moussia," he said, sighing, "I assure you that I do deserve it. What I feel is the attachment of a dog, a devotion without bounds."

"Approach, young man, and I will give you my blessing."

"Your blessing?"

"My real one. I have made you speak in this way, because

Digitized by Google

I wanted to know the feelings of those who are in love. For, suppose that I should fall in love some day, it would be well for me to be able to recognize the symptoms."

"Give me that image," said "The Innocent," who had never taken his eyes off it.

He knelt down upon the chair, on the back of which I was leaning, and tried to take the image, but I stopped him.

"No, no! around the neck."

And I passed it around his neck, still warm as it was from contact with my flesh.

"Oh!" he exclaimed. "Thank you for that! Thank you!" and he kissed my hand *of his own accord*, for the first time.

Wednesday, November 8th.—There is an *archine* of snow upon the ground, but the weather is clear and fine. We again went sleighing but in a larger sleigh, which was a mistake, for the snow is not firm enough to support the heavy iron runners.

Paul drove, and taking advantage of a moment when Pacha was not firmly seated, he lashed the horses into a run, spattering us with snow, and making Pacha yell, and my venerated person laugh. He drove us through such roads and into such masses of snow that we could do nothing but beg for mercy and laugh. Sleigh-riding, however seriously undertaken, always seems like a child's game.

Paul was on my right, and Pacha on my left. I made him put his arm behind me, so that his arm, his body, and Paul's, formed a comfortable arm-chair.

The cold frightened me less than before. I had on only my fur cloak and cap, and that rendered my movements freer and also my words.

In the evening, I sat down at the piano and played "The Reading of the Letter of Venus," a charming air from "La Belle Hélène."

"La Belle Hélène" is really a delightful opera. Offenbach, when he composed it, was at the beginning of his career, and had not yet debased his genius by writing trivial operettas.

Digitized by Google

I played a long time—I don't know what, something slow, passionate, and tender as Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words," when well rendered, alone can be.

I drank four cups of tea, while we discussed music.

"It has a great influence over me," said Pacha, "I feel very strange. It produces upon me a sentimental effect, and as I listen, I could say what I would not dare to say otherwise."

"Music is a traitress, Pacha; beware of her, she makes you do many things you would not do, if your head were cool. She seizes hold of you, twines herself around you, makes you lose your senses—and then it is terrible."

I spoke of Rome and the clairvoyant, Alexis.

Pacha listened and sighed in his corner; and when he approached the light, the expression of his face told me, more than all the words in the world, what the poor fellow was suffering.

(*Notice my ferocious vanity, my eagerness to note the details of the ravages of which I am the cause. I am a vulgar coquette; or —no—simply a woman.*)

"We are melancholy this evening," I said, gently.

"Yes," he said, with an effort, "you played, and I—I don't know— I have a sort of fever, I think."

"Go and sleep, my friend; I am going upstairs. But first help me to carry my books."

Thursday, November 9th.—My stay will, at least, have been of use to me in giving me a knowledge of the splendid literature of my country. But of what do these poets and writers speak? *The South!*

And first must be mentioned Gogol, our humoristic star. His description of Rome made me weep and sigh; but one can have no idea of him, without reading him.

He will be translated some day. And those who have had the happiness of seeing Rome, will understand my emotion.

Oh! when shall I leave this country, so gray, so cold, so

Digitized by Google

arid, even in summer, and in the bright sunlight? The foliage is shabby, and the sky is less blue than—down below.

Friday, November 10th.—I have just been reading over my journal, and I am disgusted with it—anxious, discouraged.

Rome! I can say nothing else.

I have sat five minutes with my pen in my hand, and I do not know what to say, my heart is so full. But the time is approaching, and I shall see A— again. To see A— again, frightens me. And yet, I think that I do not love him; I am even sure of it. But the memory of it all—my sorrow, my uneasiness as to the future, the fear of an affront! A—! How often that name has been written by my pen, and how I hate it!

You think that I wish to die! Idiots that you are! I adore life, such as it is; and I bless the sorrows, the anguish, the tears which God sends me, and I am happy!

In fact, I have dwelt so much on the idea of being unhappy, that when I am shut up in my own room, away from the world and men, I say to myself, that perhaps I am not so much to be pitied, after all.

Why weep, then?

Saturday, November 11th.—This morning, at 8 o'clock, I left Gavronzi, and not without a slight feeling of—regret? No; but something springing from the dislike we always feel at leaving a place to which we have become accustomed.

All the servants came out into the court. I gave them all some money, and to the housekeeper, a gold bracelet.

The snow was melting; but there was enough of it left to blow in our faces during the journey, and in spite of my wish to keep my face uncovered, so as to make my philosophical observations like Monsieur Prudhomme, I was forced, by the inexorable wind, to muffle myself up completely.

I went straight to the house of my Uncle Alexander, whose name I saw upon the plate, and he told me the following anecdote:

A gentleman was traveling with an officer, in the same

Digitized by Google

railway carriage. They engaged in a desultory conversation upon the new law concerning horses. "Was it you, Monsieur, who was sent into our district?" asked the gentleman, of the officer. "Yes, Monsieur." "Then you have, doubtless, registered the Isabella horses of our marshal, Bashkirtseff?' "Yes, Monsieur." And the officer described their faults and their good qualities.

"Do you know Mademoiselle Bashkirtseff?"

"No, Monsieur, I have not that honor. I have only seen her; but I know Monsieur Bashkirtseff. Mademoiselle Bashkirtseff is a lovely girl; she is a real beauty; and her beauty has something independent, original, ingenuous about it. I saw her in a railway carriage, and my companions and I were positively startled by her appearance." "That is all the more agreeable for me to hear," said the gentleman, "as I am her uncle." "And I, Monsieur, am named Soumorokoff. But your name?" "Babanine." "Enchanted." "Charmed," etc., etc. The count did not cease repeating that my place was in St. Petersburg, and that it was outrageous to keep me at Poltava.

Ah! my father! my father!

"But, uncle," I said, "you have, probably, invented all this."

"May I never see my wife and children again, and may the lightning strike me, if I have invented a single word!"

My father was in a rage, to which I did not pay the slightest attention.

Poltava, Wednesday, November 15th.—Sunday evening I left with my father, after having seen much of Prince Michel and the others, during my last two days in Russia.

At the station, there was only my family with me, but many strangers stared curiously at our luggage.

The journey to Vienna alone cost me nearly 500 roubles. I paid for it all myself. The horses came with us, under the charge of Choçolate and Kouzma, my father's valet.

I wanted to take a different man, but Kouzma, devoured by a desire to journey, begged to go.

Digitized by Google

Chocolate will keep a sharp lookout, for Kouzma is a sort of absent-minded idiot, who would let the horses be stolen from him, and even his own clothes.

He married a girl who had loved him for a long time, and after the ceremony, he fled to the garden and remained there two hours, weeping and complaining like a madman. He really is a little mad, I think, and his bewildered manner is very noticeable.

My father was in a fume all the time. As for me, I walked up and down the platform as if I were at home. Pacha stood off at a distance and kept his eyes on me constantly.

At the last moment it was discovered that there was a package missing, then there arose a miniature tempest and there was a great running to and fro. Amalia tried to excuse herself, and I reproached her with serving me badly. The public listened and was amused, which I observing, redoubled my eloquence, in the language of Dante. It especially amused me, because the train was waiting for us. There is one good thing in this wretched country; one is lord and master there.

Uncle Alexander, Paul, and Pacha entered the carriage; but the third bell announced that we were about to start and they pressed around me.

"Paul, Paul," exclaimed Pacha, "let me say good-bye to her, at least."

"Let him come to me," I said.

He kissed my hand, and I touched with my lips his cheek near the eye. This is the custom in Russia, but I never made a practice of it.

They waited for the whistle, and it was not long before it blew.

"Well?" said I.

"I still have time," said Pacha.

The train began to move slowly, and Pacha commenced to speak very quickly, but not knowing what he said.

"*Au revoir, au revoir*, jump!"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, adieu, *au revoir*."

He leaped upon the platform, after having again kissed my hand—the kiss of a faithful and respectful dog.

"Well, well!" called my father, from within, for we were in the passage-way of the car.

I came to him, but so afflicted by the sorrow of which I was the cause, that I immediately laid down and closed my eyes to be free to think.

Poor Pacha! dear, noble boy, if I regret anything in Russia it is that heart of gold, that loyal character, that direct and manly spirit.

Am I really sorry? Yes. As if it were possible to be insensible to the just pride of having such a friend!

The night from Tuesday to Wednesday, I slept very well in a bed, as if I were in a hotel.

I am in Vienna. Physically speaking, my journey was perfect. I slept well, ate well, and was well. That is the chief thing, and possible only in Russia, where the railway carriages are heated and have dressing-rooms.

My father was passably pleasant. We played cards and amused ourselves by criticising our fellow-travelers. But this evening he was disagreeable in his own peculiar way.

He took a box at the opera, but refused to accompany me, unless we went in our traveling dresses.

"You take advantage of my position," I said; "but I will not permit anyone to tyrannize over me. I shall not go. Good-night."

And here I am in my own room. My position? Yes, I haven't a sou, for I have only drafts upon Paris, which will be of no use to me until I arrive there.

Before abandoning my horses, I gave 500 roubles to Kouzma and that left me with only my drafts. I told this to my father who was offended, and took the most noble attitude, exclaiming that expense was nothing to him, and to spend for me was

Digitized by Google

a mere trifle, in comparison with what he had been accustomed to spend all his life.

This place really seems like Europe and civilization; the fine, lofty houses raise my spirits as high as their topmost story. The low structures of Poltava crushed me down. I do miss, however, the fine light we had in the railway carriages yesterday.

Saturday, November 18th.—We arrived in Paris this morning at 5 o'clock.

We found a dispatch from mamma at the Grand Hotel, where we had rooms on the first floor. I took a bath and waited for mamma; but I was in such low spirits that nothing roused me.

She arrived with Dina. Dina cheerful, tranquil, and continuing her work of sister of charity, of guardian angel.

You can imagine, probably, that I was never so embarrassed in my life. Papa and mamma together! I did not know what to do with myself.

There was some little friction, but nothing remarkably disquieting.

Mother, father, Dina, and I all went out. We dined together and went to the theatre. I drew back into the darkest corner of the box, and my eyes were so heavy with sleep that I saw scarcely anything.

I slept with mamma, and instead of tender words, after so long a separation, there escaped from my lips only a torrent of complaints, which soon ceased, however, for I fell asleep.

Monday, November 20th.—After dinner, we went to see "Paul and Virginia," the new opera by Victor Massé, which has been very highly praised.

The Parisian boxes are instruments of torture; we were four in a box which cost 150 francs, and we could not move.

An interval of one or two hours between dinner and the theatre; a large, fine box and an elegant, becoming gown.

Digitized by Google

Under those conditions I can appreciate and love music. But everything was precisely the opposite, which, however, did not prevent me from listening with all my ears to Engally, the Russian prima-donna, and from gazing with all my eyes at Capoul, the darling of the ladies. Certain of admiration, the fortunate artist took as many attitudes as a fencing master and uttered ear-splitting notes.

It is already 2 o'clock in the morning.

Mamma, who forgets everything to think only of my comfort, had a long conversation with my father.

But he answered with jests or with sentences which showed a revolting indifference.

Finally, he said that he understood perfectly my conduct; that even mamma's enemies could see nothing to find fault in it, and that it would be proper for his daughter, who had now reached the age of sixteen, to have a father for a protector. So he promised to go to Rome as we proposed.

If I could only believe it!

Friday, November 25th.—Until this evening, everything progressed well enough; but, all at once, they began a very serious, calm, and frank conversation in regard to my future. Mamma expressed herself in all respects in the most admirable manner.

Then, you should have seen my father. He half closed his eyes, he whistled; but, as for answering—oh, dear, no!

There is a Russian dialogue which is characteristic of the nation and which can, at the same time, give an idea of my father's manner of dealing with a subject.

Two peasants:

First peasant.—We were walking together along the road.

Second peasant.—Yes, we were.

First peasant.—We found a coat.

Second peasant.—We did.

First peasant.—I gave it to you.

Second peasant.—You did.

Digitized by Google

First peasant.—You took it.
Second peasant.—I did.
First peasant.—Where is it?
Second peasant.—Where is what?
First peasant.—The coat.
Second peasant.—What coat?
First peasant.—We were walking along the road.
Second peasant.—Yes.
First peasant.—We found a coat.
Second peasant.—We did.
First peasant.—I gave it to you.
Second peasant.—You did.
First peasant.—You took it.
Second peasant.—I did.
First peasant.—Where is it?
Second peasant.—Where is what?
First peasant.—The coat.
Second peasant.—What coat?

And so on, *ad infinitum*. But, as the subject possessed no element of drollery for me, I felt as if I should stifle, and something rose up in my throat which hurt me frightfully, especially as I would not permit myself to cry.

I asked permission to return with Dina, leaving mamma and her husband at the Russian restaurant.

For a whole hour I remained motionless, with my lips pressed tightly together and an oppression on my chest; knowing neither what I was thinking of nor what was going on around me.

Then my father came to me, kissed my hair, my hands, and my face, with hypocritical murmurings, and said to me:

"The day when you shall have real need of my aid or protection, say a word to me and I will stretch out my hand."

I gathered together such strength as remained to me, and, clearing my throat, I replied:

"The day has come; where is your hand?"

Digitized by Google

"You have no need of me at present," he answered, hastily.

"Yes, I have need of you."

"No, no."

And he tried to change the subject.

"Do you think, father, that the day will come when I shall need money? On that day, I would become a singer or a music teacher; but I would never ask anything of you!"

He was not offended. He was too well satisfied to see that I was so unhappy that I had no strength to say or do anything more.

Saturday, November 25th.—Mamma was so unwell that she could not think of going to Versailles. Our friends came for us. I was dressed in white, as usual, with a bonnet of black velvet, which made a charming combination with my blonde hair. It was raining. After we were seated in the train, a gentleman, decorated and still young, entered.

"Permit me, my dear," said the baroness, "to present to you Monsieur J. de L—, one of the chiefs of the Napoleonic party."

I bowed, while other introductions went on about me.

The "deputies' train" recalled to me the trains which ran to the pigeon-shooting matches at Monaco; only, instead of guns, the gentlemen carried portfolios.

The Messieurs de L— placed us in the front row, on the right, above the Bonapartists, so that we were exactly opposite the Republican benches. The hall, or at least the President's arm-chair, and the tribunal reminded me again of the pigeon-shooting; but Monsieur Grévy, instead of holding the string of the cages, tapped a bell, which did not prevent the Left from interrupting many times the excellent speech of the keeper of the seals, Monsieur Dufaure. He is an honest man, and he has struggled bravely and wisely against the infamies of the Republican dogs.

November 26th.—My father has gone. For the first time in four months, I breathe freely.

November 28th.—Mamma took me to see Doctor Fauvel,

Digitized by Google

and he examined my throat with his new laryngoscope. He said that I was afflicted with catarrh, chronic laryngitis, etc. (which I do not doubt, considering the bad condition of my throat), and that to be cured I must have six weeks of energetic treatment. This means that we must pass the winter in Paris. Alas!

My father is simply delightful! In the first place, he made me spend money while I was staying in his house; then, he did not pay for my journey, and, as he was ashamed, he summoned Uncle Alexander, embraced him, and assured him that he would return me my expenses. He need not have said it, he will never be asked for anything. Then he allowed Kouzma to accompany those wretched horses. I paid their transport and Kouzma's, and now mamma has just opened a letter from this man to father.

"I await your orders, Monsieur, detained on the way. As for Chocolate, I have sent him back to Poltava, according to your orders."

Without counting that my dear father compelled me to give 500 roubles to Kouzma, which Kouzma is now spending.

Upon my word, it was a fine present he made me!

"You deprived your daughter of *all society* so that no one could make comments. You hid her because you did not wish people to see what she is, as you, yourself, never gave a sou for her education," mamma said to him. And he answered with flat and revolting jests, without denying or explaining anything.

Friday, December 1st.—Yesterday, we left Paris. Mamma, with her thirty-six packages, reduced me to despair. Her cries, her alarms, and her boxes were so *bourgeois*.

Well, let it pass!

Nice, Saturday, December 2d.—My aunt, herself, brought me my coffee. I unpacked some trunks and became myself for the first time since my journey. In Russia, I needed the sun; in Paris, gowns.

Digitized by Google

Please observe the way I have to live. Packing, unpacking, trying on gowns, purchasing, traveling. And that is all there is of it!

When I went down into the garden, I found Monsieur Pélican with Doctor Broussais, Ivanoff, grandpapa's oculist, General Wolf, General Bihovitz, and the Anitchkoffs.

But I left them all to go and see my women of the Rue de France.

What a reception!

They told me of all the marriages, deaths, and births.

I asked how business was.

"Bad," they told me.

"Ah!" I cried, "everything is bad since France has become a republic."

And then I talked and talked. When they heard that I had seen the Chamber at Versailles, they drew back with great respect, and then pressed about me. Then, with arms akimbo, I made them a speech full of strong expressions and Nicene exclamations, and showed them the Republicans with their hands in the people's money-bags. "Like my hands in this rice!" and I suited the action to the word by plunging them into a sack of rice.

After so long an absence, the skies of Nice transport me, and I feel light-hearted as I breathe the pure air and look at the transparent sky.

The sea scarcely gilded by the sun half hidden behind clouds of soft, warm gray; the emerald verdure—how beautiful it all is and how good it is to live in this paradise! I started to walk down the Promenade, forgetting my uncovered head and the numerous passers-by. Then I returned for a hat, and took my aunt and Bihovitz. I went as far as the Pont du Midi, and returned overwhelmed with sadness.

Well, really, my family have their good points. We played cards, we laughed, we took tea, and I was penetrated with a sense of comfort, to be in the midst of my own people and

Digitized by Google

surrounded by my dear dogs—Victor, with his great black head; Pincio, white as snow; Bagatelle and Prater.

All this was before my eyes, and at this moment I can see the old men playing their game, the dogs, the dining-room—oh, it oppresses me, stifles me! I would like to fly away from it all, but it seems to me as if I were bound down, as in a nightmare. *I can not bear it!!!* I was not made for this life, I can not bear it!

For an instant I felt some satisfaction on speaking of serious things to the old men; but, after all, they are obscure old men. What good can they do me?

I have such fear of remaining in Nice, that it is driving me almost crazy. It seems to me that this winter, too, will be lost and I shall do nothing.

They deprive me of the means of working!

General Bihovitz sent me a large basket of flowers, and to-night mamma watered them to keep them from fading. Well, these little nothings drive me wild; this affectation of the manners of the middle class makes me desperate!

Ah, divine pity! Ah, I swear to you that I mean what I say!

I returned from the pavilion through the enchanting moonlight, which silvered my roses and magnolias.

The poor garden, which has given me only sad thoughts and atrocious vexation!

I came up to my room with wet eyes, and sad, very sad.

The memory of Rome makes me faint! But I do not wish to return there. We shall go to Paris.

Oh, Rome! May I see thee once again or die here! I hold my breath and draw myself up as if I would *stretch* myself to Rome.

Sunday, December 3d.—My only amusements are the changes of the sky. Yesterday, it was clear, and the moon glittered like a pale sun; this evening, the sky is covered with dark clouds, broken here and there with patches as clear and bright as

Digitized by Google

yesterday. I noticed this as I crossed the garden, on the way from the pavilion to my room. In Paris, we have not this air, this verdure, and the perfumed dew of this night.

Thursday, December 7th.—The little domestic worries discourage me. I occupy myself with serious reading, and I see with despair that I know so little. Never, it seems to me, shall I know it all. I envy the withered, wrinkled, ugly *savants*. I am feverish to study, and there is no one to tell me how.

Monday, December 11th.—Every day I grow fonder and fonder of painting. I worked nearly all day, then I played a little, and it affected my head and my heart. I had to have a two hours' conversation with grandpapa upon the history of Russia, to bring me back to my normal condition. I detest being *sensitive*. In a young girl, it takes all pleasure away from a host of things.

Grandpapa is a living encyclopedia.

I know one person who loves me, understands me, pities me, who employs every hour in efforts to make me happier; someone who will do everything for me and will succeed; someone who will never betray me again—although that happened once—and that person is *myself*.

Let us expect nothing from men, for we will have only deceit and sorrow.

But let us believe firmly in God and our own strength. And, faith! since we are ambitious, let us justify our ambition by doing something.

Monday, December 18th.—Yesterday, I was awakened by a maid who brought me my father's card with these words written on it: "I am at the Hôtel du Luxembourg with my sisters; if you can, come at once."

After consultation with my mother and my aunt, at exactly 1 o'clock I responded to this invitation; but, before entering, I once more asked myself if it were *proper*. Before I could answer the question, Aunt Hélène and my father came out to

Digitized by Google

the carriage, greeted me very affectionately, and took me up to their apartments.

Aunt Hélène and the princess spoke to me of the Cardinal, and advised me to go to Rome and capture his nephew and his money.

"The poor little thing," I said; "he is below there."

"Where?"

"In Servia."

"Why, no, he is in Rome."

"Perhaps he has returned, for they are no longer fighting there. I dined, yesterday, with a Russian volunteer, who has just arrived from Servia."

Then they spoke of Aunt Tutcheff, and I denounced her in glowing terms, threatening her with a suit for libel.

When anyone attacks my mother, or my family, they can defend themselves! But let no one touch me, for as sure as I am a defenseless creature, whom it is cowardly to slander, I will bravely avenge myself! And for an excellent reason, too; because I am afraid of nothing.

San Remo, Saturday, December 23d.—Shall I take my father away with me? He consents to go, for two days, but with mamma. While waiting for mamma, to whom I have telegraphed to come, I passed a few hours at the Villa Rocca, with Princess Eristoff. My Aunt Romanoff, heroic creature, remained in tiresome solitude at the hotel. She, naturally, does not wish to mingle with the people I have to meet. But do you see the part she plays, to indulge my caprices? I adore her.

Monday, December 25th.—We left San Remo yesterday—my father, my mother, and myself. What were my thoughts during the journey? Charming reveries and cloudless fancies overpowered all other sentiments, and gave me, as usual, a life detached from human affairs.

It was a very agreeable state, which was interrupted by the stopping of the train near the station of Albiasola, because of

Digitized by Google

a landslide. We had to get out, seize our luggage, and walk some little distance to take another train. The scene by the flickering light of the torches, against the black sky, was picturesque.

The accident caused us to enter into conversation with our traveling companions, one of whom was an officer in the army.

They helped us with our bags, during the difficult walk. The officer was quite intelligent and well read, and to his astonishment, I entered into a lengthy and serious political discussion with him.

As soon as it was day-light, I took the seat next the window, in order not to lose for a single instant the sight of the country about Rome. Why do I not know how to express all the beautiful things I thought, and that so many others have said so many times and in such a charming way?

I was entirely occupied in recognizing the various familiar places. The engine was already under the glass roof of the station, while I was still seeking for a sight of Saint John of Latran.

The Spanish ambassadress, who had come to meet some friends, was at the station. I turned my head away when she recognized me. I was ashamed to come to Rome; it seemed to me that I would be regarded as an intruder.

We went to the same old hotel, and had the same apartment. I mounted the stairs, and leaned against the balustrade in the same place where I stood *that* evening. I am now occupying the red room, and—will you believe it?—thinking of Pietro.

Wednesday, December 27th.—Mamma was speaking of Rossi, when that amiable man came ambling into the room.

"Well," he said, after the first greetings, "that poor Pietro A— has lost his uncle."

"Yes, poor fellow. Did he inherit anything?"

"Only some silver plate."

Digitized by Google

Then everybody talked at once. After which, with commendable frankness, I asked Rossi what people had said of me. We spoke Italian.

"You understand," I added, "that people do not know us, and they might very easily take me for one of those foreigners who come to Rome in search of a husband."

We talked quite a long time, and I believe that I am convinced that the public attached no importance to the matter.

"No one thought of him as a match for you," said Rossi; "he is a poor fellow who has neither fortune nor position. In the beginning they may have thought—But, at all events, you have given him a shock, and, perhaps, he will now reform."

"But he is past redemption."

"Oh, no; poor fellow, he suffers much."

Digitized by Google

1877.

Nice, Wednesday, January 17th.—When, then, shall I know what this love is that people talk so much about?

I could have loved A—; but now I despise him. I loved the Duke of H— madly, when I was a child—a love due entirely to the fortune, the name, and the extravagances of the duke, and to an imagination which knew no bounds.

Tuesday, January 23d.—Last night, I had an attack of despair which started me moaning and which made me throw the dining-room clock into the sea. Dina ran after me, suspecting some terrible design on my part, but it was only the clock. It was made of bronze, with a "Virginia-less Paul," in a very pretty hat and with a fishing-rod in his hand. Dina came into my room and seemed very much amused over the episode of the clock. I laughed, too.

Poor clock.

The Princess Souvaroff has come to make us a visit.

Thursday, February 1st.—The ladies were disposed to go to Monaco and enjoy themselves by losing a few miserable hundreds of francs. I brought them back to reason by one of my most bitter discourses, and we went, mamma and I, to take an airing and then to call on the Countess of Ballore, who is so pleasant and whom we have neglected in the most ill-bred manner. We saw Diaz de Loria, the incomparable singer.

I went to the Théâtre-Française, where Agar of the Comédie-Française was giving a performance. I heard "*Les Horaces.*" The name of Rome resounded twenty times in my ears in a superb and sublime fashion.

On my return, I read Livy. The heroes, the folds of the togas, the Capitol, the dome, the masked ball, the Pincio!

Digitized by Google

Oh, Rome!

Rome, Thursday, February 8th.—I went to sleep at Vintimille, and only awoke, morally and physically, at Rome.

Against my will I am obliged to remain until evening, for the train does not leave for Naples until 10 o'clock. A whole day at Rome!

I left Rome, went to sleep, and I am now in Naples. I did not sleep so soundly, however, but that I heard an ill-natured gentleman complain to the conductor of Prater's presence in the carriage. The gallant conductor took the part of our dog.

But here is Naples. Are you like me? When I approach a great and beautiful city, I grow restless and my heart beats, and I feel as if I should like to own the whole city.

It took us more than an hour to reach the Hôtel du Louvre. There was a blockade in the street, yells and confusion.

The women here have enormous heads; they look like the women that are exhibited in the menageries with serpents, tigers, etc.

In Rome, I love only what is old. In Naples, there is nothing pretty that is not new.

Sunday, February 11th.—To understand our position in the midst of the Toledo, you must know that this is the day on which they throw *coriandoli* (*confetti* with chalk or flour). Whoever has not seen it, can not imagine the scene—the thousands of hands at the end of thin, dark arms, the rags, the superb cars, the feathers, and the gilding; but especially the hands, the fingers of which move with an agility that would drive mad with envy Liszt himself. In the midst of the shower of flour, and the cries of the howling multitude, we felt ourselves taken away by Altamura and almost carried to his balcony. There we found a number of ladies, who offered me refreshments, smiled at me, and were very pleasant. I went into a room which was half dark, and there, wrapped

Digitized by Google

in my Bedouin mantle from head to feet, I began to shed tears, at the same time admiring the antique folds of my drapery. I was very sad, but it was a sadness which gave me pleasure. Can you understand, like me, what it is to be happy in our unhappiness?

Naples, Monday, February 26th.—I continued my excursions to-day, and we visited San Martino, an old convent, and I have never seen anything more interesting. Museums usually chill one, but that of San Martino amuses and delights. The antique carriage of the Syndic and the gallery of Charles III. fascinated me; and the corridors with their mosaic floors and the ceilings with their grand mouldings. The church and the chapels are something marvelous, and they are of such moderate size that all the details can be admired. Polished marbles, precious stones, mosaics in every corner, above and below, on the ceiling as well as on the floor. I do not think that I saw many remarkable paintings—yes, those by Guido Reni and Spagnoletto. Then there were the patiently wrought works of Fra Buenaventura; the ancient porcelains of Capo di Monte; the portraits on silk and a picture on glass representing the episode of Potiphar's wife. The court of white marble, with its sixty columns, is of rare beauty.

Our guide told us that there were only five monks remaining in the monastery; three brothers and two laymen who lived somewhere upstairs in a neglected wing.

We went up into a sort of tower, with two balconies suspended one above the other. It made me feel as if I were on the top of a precipice; but the view is wonderfully beautiful. You can see the mountains, the villas, the plains, and Naples, through a sort of blue mist, which is really only the effect of distance.

"What is going on in Naples, to-day?" I asked, listening.

"Nothing. It is only the usual noise of the Neapolitan people," replied the guide, with a smile.

"Is it always so?"

Digitized by Google

"Always."

There rose up above the roofs a clamor, a continual yelling like uninterrupted explosions of voices, of which one can form no idea in the city itself. It really gives you a sort of a shock, and the noise rising up with the blue mist makes you strangely conscious of the height at which you stand, and gives you the vertigo.

The marble chapels delighted me. The country that possesses what Italy does is the richest country in the world. I compare Italy to the rest of the universe as a magnificent picture to a whitewashed wall.

How did I dare to judge Naples last year? I hadn't even seen it.

Saturday, March 3d.—This evening I went to the church which is in the hotel itself; there is a great charm in indulging in meditations upon love, when one is in a church. You see the priest, the images, the light of the candles shining through the obscurity and — I was transported to Rome!!! Divine ecstasy, celestial perfume, delicious transports, oh, to be able to describe it on paper!!!

The sentiments I felt could only be expressed in song.

The columns of St. Peter's, its marbles, its mosaics, the mysterious depth of the church, the overwhelming splendor of the majesty of art, antiquity, the Middle Ages, great men, monuments, it was all there.

Saturday, March 31st.—What is the use of complaining? My tears will effect nothing. I am doomed to be unhappy. That always, and then artistic fame. And if I fail! Ah, have no fear, I will not live to rust somewhere in the practice of the domestic virtues.

I do not care to speak of love, because I have done so without avail. I will no longer appeal to God to bless me, for I want to die.

My God, Lord Jesus Christ, let me die! My life has been short, but the lesson learned has been a hard one. I want to

Digitized by Google

die. I am as incoherent and as disordered as what I write, and I detest myself as I detest everything that is miserable. Let me die! My God! Let me die! I have had enough of it!

Let me have a peaceful death! Let me die singing some beautiful air of Verdi's. No rebellious feeling rises within me as before, when I wished to live *expressly* that *others* might not rejoice and triumph. Now it is a matter of supreme indifference to me; I suffer too much.

Sunday, April 1st.—I am like the patient, untiring chemist who passes his nights before his retorts in order not to miss the expected and longed-for moment. It seems to me that *it* is going to happen every day, and I think and wait, and after all what do I know? I examine myself curiously and with eager eyes, and I ask myself anxiously if perhaps this may not be *it*. But I have formed such an opinion of *it*, that I have arrived at the conclusion that *it* does not exist, or that *it* has already happened, and that it was nothing so very *wonderful* after all.

But, how about all my imaginings and the books and the poets? Would they have had the audacity to invent something which does not exist in order to cover up natural vileness? No! for, in that case, we could not explain our preferences.

Naples, Friday, April 6th.—The King (Victor Emmanuel) arrived yesterday, and this morning at 10 o'clock he came to pay a visit to the Prince of Prussia. At the moment of his arrival, I was standing on the stairs, and as he came face to face with me, I said:

"Two words, Sire, I implore."

"What do you wish?"

"Absolutely nothing, Sire, except to be able to boast all my life that I have spoken to the kindest and the best King in the world."

"You are too good, and I thank you very much."

"That is absolutely all, Sire."

Digitized by Google

"I thank you; I do not know how to thank you; you are very good."

And he squeezed my hand in both his own. In consequence of this, I shall keep my gloves on for a week. It is because I have my gloves on now that my writing looks so odd. I shall have very long nails in a week.

What do you think of me? I was not very much frightened!

In doing what I did, I took everything into account, excepting *myself*. To anyone else, the adventure would have brought a host of charming things; to me, it brought only a mass of disagreeable things.

Doenhoff came from the palace, where the prince had been to return the King's visit. The King's aid-de-camp said to him: "What a queer thing it was for that young girl to stop the King!" And the Prince of Prussia told the King that the young girls of Russia are devoted to the royal family, that they commit all sorts of follies for the Emperor, and that they are as pure as the angels of heaven. Thanks, sausage-maker!

Doenhoff said a lot of things; in fact, he came to reassure us.

After foolish agitation and terror, I am beginning to recover myself. I have never in my life been so frightened. In one hour I lived two years. How happy everybody who has never spoken to the King must be!

All my family have gone out to walk. Humbert and the Princess Marguerite have arrived. Doenhoff is just opposite our windows, talking to the gentlemen in waiting on the King. (I have taken off my gloves.)

When we returned from the races, we found a strange gentleman in the antechamber. I was about to ask who he was, when Rosalie ran up to me, and taking me aside, said: "Come quickly, but don't be excited."

"Who is he?"

Digitized by Google

"He is one of the King's aids-de-camp, and this is the third time that he has been here; he comes from the King."

I went up to the man, and in an instant we were all in the *salon*. He spoke Italian, and I answered him in that language with a facility which surprised me.

"Mademoiselle," he began, "I come from the King, who has sent me as a special messenger to express to you the regret he feels that he may have caused you any unpleasantness yesterday. His Majesty has learned that you have been scolded by your mother, who, perhaps, thought that the King was annoyed. It is not so, however, the King was delighted, enchanted; he has spoken of it constantly, and this evening he called me and said: 'Go and say to that young lady that I thank her for the act of courtesy she showed me; tell her that her sweetness and her generous impulse have touched me greatly; that I thank her, her and all her family. Far from being angry I am enchanted, and say that to her mamma, *sua mamma*, tell her that I shall always remember it.' The King saw that your action sprang from your heart, and it is that which flattered him. The King knows that you have nothing to ask for from him, that you are foreigners, and that is the very thing that has touched him. He has spoken of it constantly, and he has sent me to make his excuses for anything you may have had to suffer."

Mamma made Count Doenhoff believe that I had been shut up for twenty-four hours as a punishment for my escapade, and the rumor soon spread, especially as I remained behind the blinds of the balcony, while Dina went to walk with mamma.

I had interrupted the aid-de-camp ten times, and finally I burst out in a perfect flow of words expressive of my gratitude and delight.

The King was too, too good to think of reassuring me. I was an idiot, who thought that I was in my own country and was seeing my Emperor, whom I had once spoken to. (That is true.) I should be in despair if the King had been in the

Digitized by Google

least annoyed by what I had done. I had been terribly afraid that I had offended the King; perhaps I frightened him by my brusque manner—

"His Majesty is never frightened when a *bella ragazza* is in question, and I repeat to you, in the name of the King—they are his words, I add nothing—that, far from being annoyed, he is enchanted, delighted, grateful. You have given him great pleasure. The King noticed you last year at Rome and at the carnival of Naples, and the King was very much displeased with Count Doenhoff, whose name he has made a note of, because he told you something and prevented you from seeing the King when he left."

I must state here, that Doenhoff, in his alarm, locked the door, which I did not perceive, being too excited to dream of seeing the King again.

"I have said all this in the name of His Majesty, repeating only his own words."

"Well, Monsieur, repeat to him mine; say to the King that I am delighted and only too much honored, that his thoughtfulness touches me to the highest degree, that I will never forget the King's goodness and exquisite delicacy, that I am too happy and too honored. Say to the King, that I acted like a goose, but since he is not too angry—"

"Enchanted, Mademoiselle."

"It will be my happiest memory. How is it possible not to adore the royal family when they are so good and so affable? I can understand thoroughly the love the people have for the King, Prince Humbert, and the Princess Marguerite." And finally, the gentleman asked mamma to give him her card that he might deliver it to the King.

Now, I don't care what anyone says—quite the contrary. Blow, trumpets!

From the moment that I knew that the King was not angry, I have been in heaven!

They are saying in the hotel that he kissed my hand.

Digitized by Google

Doenhoff has come from the palace, where there was a dinner with 130 covers. The King spoke of me and repeated many times: "She is excessively pretty."

The King is a good judge, and his opinion has raised me wonderfully in the eyes of Doenhoff and everybody else.

Tuesday, April 17th.—Every citizen must serve his time in the army; in the same way each person must serve his apprenticeship in love. I have done so, and I am free until I receive new orders.

Remittuntur ei peccata multa quare dilexit multum. Dulciores sunt lacrymæ orantium quam gaudia theatrorum.

AUGUSTIN.

Florence, Tuesday, May 8th.—Do you want to know the truth? Well, make a note of what I am going to say to you: I love no one, and I shall love only the person who will flatter my self-love—my vanity.

When you know that you are loved, you act for *the other* and you are not ashamed; on the contrary, you feel heroic.

I know well that I shall ask nothing for myself, but for another I would undergo a hundred humiliations, for such humiliations are elevating.

This simply proves that the finest deeds have their foundation in egoism. To ask anything for myself would be sublime, because it would cost me so much to do so; why, the very thought of it is horror! But to do anything for another gives you pleasure, and you have the air of being self-sacrificing, devoted, and charitable.

You believe, yourself, in your merit for the time being. You ingenuously believe that you are charitable, unselfish, sublime!

Friday, May 11th.—Have I said that Gordigiani has been to see us, encouraged me, promised me an artistic future, found much good in my drawings, and was very anxious to paint my portrait?

Florence, Saturday, May 12th.—My heart is broken at the idea of leaving Florence.

Digitized by Google

To go to Nice! I prepare for it as if I were going to cross a desert. I would like to shave my head so as not to have the trouble of arranging my hair.

Our trunks are packed, we are going! The ink dries upon my pen before I can think of a word to write, so great are my regrets.

Nice, Wednesday, May 16th.—I have been running about all the morning trying to find a few trifles that I want for my dressing-room; but in this miserable place, you can not find anything. I went to a painter on glass, a tinsmith's, and I don't know where.

The idea that my journal will not be interesting, the impossibility of giving it interest by arranging surprises, torments me. If I wrote only at intervals, I might perhaps do better, but these notes of every day will be read patiently only by some thinker, some great observer of human nature. Whoever shall not have the patience to read all, will be able to read nothing and above all will understand nothing.

I am happy in my pretty, soft nest in the midst of my garden of flowers. Nice does not exist, I am in my own country house.

Nice, Wednesday, May 23d.—Oh, when I think that there is only one life and that each minute brings us nearer to death, it drives me mad!!

I do not fear death, but life is so short that to waste it is infamous!

Thursday, May 24th.—Two eyes are not enough, if one desires to accomplish anything. Reading and drawing fatigue me terribly, and in the evening, when I write these wretched lines, I am sleepy.

Ah! what a happy time is youth!

With what delight I shall some time remember the days devoted to study and art. If I could only give up a whole year to these occupations, I might achieve something; but a day here, a week there, means so little. Natures to whom God has given so much, use themselves up in doing nothing.

Digitized by Google

I try to calm myself with the thought that next winter I will go to work in earnest; but my seventeen years make me blush to the roots of my hair. Almost seventeen, and what have I accomplished? Nothing. The thought crushes me. For my consolation, I seek, among the names of celebrated people, for those who began late in life; but, seventeen years for a man is nothing, while a woman at seventeen should be as far advanced as a man at twenty-three.

To go and live in Paris, in the North, after the beautiful sunlight, and the calm, clear nights! What can one desire, what can one care for, after Italy? Paris, the heart of the civilized world, of intelligence, of wit, of fashion—of course people go there, remain there, and like it; in fact, one must go there for a multitude of things, to return with more pleasure to God's country, the country of the blessed—an enchanted, marvelous, divine country, of the supreme beauty and marvelous charm of which no words can convey any idea!

People go to Italy and ridicule its mean little villages and its lazzaroni, and they sometimes do this with much wit, and often with a show of reason; but forget for an instant that you are clever and that it is very amusing to rail at everything, and you will be, like me, in an ecstasy, crying and laughing with admiration.

I started in to say that it is a lovely moonlight night and that in Paris I shall not have this calm, this poetry, these divine delights of nature and heaven.

Tuesday, May 29th.—The more I advance from youth to old age, the more indifferent do I become. Few things move me now, while everything moved me once. As I read over the record of my life and see how trifles made my blood boil, I recognize that I attached altogether too much importance to them.

Trust and sensitiveness, which are to one's character what the bloom is to the peach, are soon lost.

I regret all the more the loss of this freshness of feeling,

Digitized by Google

because it is never recovered. One is more peaceful without it, but less capable of enjoyment. Disappointments ought not to have come to me so early. If I had not had them, I should have become something supernatural; I feel it.

I have just finished a book which has disgusted me with love. A charming princess in love with a painter! Fie! I don't mean to insult painters by any stupid affectation; but, I don't know why, the story offends me. I have always had aristocratic ideas, and I believe in good blood in men as much as I do in horses. Often, always, indeed, in the early days, noble races became so in consequence of moral and physical education, the effects of which were transmitted from father to son; but what matters the cause?

Wednesday, May 30th.—I have been turning over the leaves which contain the A— episode, and it is really surprising how well I reasoned. I am amazed and filled with admiration. I had forgotten all those true and just reflections, and I was somewhat uneasy lest anyone should believe that I once loved Count A—. Fortunately, no one can believe it, thanks to this dear journal. No, truly, I did not think that I had said so many truths, and, above all, thought them. It was a year ago and I was afraid that I had written nonsense; but, no, and I am very much pleased with myself. Still, I can not understand how I could have behaved so foolishly and reasoned so well.

I must recall that no advice in the world would have prevented me from acting as I did. I needed experience.

It gives me a disagreeable impression to feel that I am so worldly-wise; but it is a natural sequence, and, when I become accustomed to it, I shall rise again to that ideal purity, which lurks forever somewhere in the soul; and then, it will be still better, for I shall be calmer, prouder, and happier; because I shall know how to appreciate it, although now I am vexed as if I were judging another.

The woman who writes this and the one I describe are two

Digitized by Google

distinct beings. Why do all these tribulations come to *me*? I write them down, I analyze them, I copy my daily life; but to *me*, to *me myself*, the whole thing is a matter of perfect indifference. It is my pride, my self-love, my interests, my complexion, my eyes, which suffer, weep, enjoy; but *I*, I am only there to look on, to narrate and coldly discuss all these great troubles, as Gulliver must have regarded his Lilliputians.

I have much more that I might say in explanation of myself, but let this suffice.

Monday, June 11th.—Last evening, while they were playing at cards, I made a rough sketch of them by the light of two flickering candles, and this morning I transferred the players to canvas.

I was delighted to paint four seated persons, to make the position of the hands and the arms, and the expressions. I had never before done anything but heads, and it will delight me now to scatter these heads like flowers over the canvas.

Paris, Saturday, July 7th.—I think I can say with truth that I have recently become more sensible. I see things in a more natural light, and I have recovered from many of my illusions and many of my sorrows.

One's own experience alone teaches true wisdom.

Sunday, July 15th.—I am so weary of life that I should like to die. It seems to me that nothing in the world can amuse or interest me. I hope nothing, I want nothing. Yes, I would like not to be ashamed of the condition to which I have sunk. To be able, in a word, to do nothing, to think of nothing, to live like a plant, without having any remorse.

Captain B— passed the evening with us, and we talked together. I am disgusted enough with my conversational powers since I have read what Madame de Staël has said in regard to the imitation of French wit by foreigners. To believe her, one should hide one's head and never dare attempt to rival the sublime genius of the French.

Reading drawing, music—nothing but *ennui, ennui, ennui.*

Digitized by Google

Outside of my occupations and my amusements, I need some real, living interest, and without it I am bored to death.

I am not weary of life, because I have not married yet; no, you have too good an opinion of me to believe that. I am weary of it, because everything has gone wrong with me, and because—well, because I *am* weary of it.

Paris kills me! It is a café, a well-kept hotel, a bazar. However, I must hope that with the winter, the opera, the Bois, and my studies, I shall grow to endure it.

Tuesday, July 17th.—I have passed all day in seeing real marvels of antique and artistic embroideries, and gowns that were chivalrous or bucolic poems. All sorts of splendors which gave me an idea of a luxury that I had never before even suspected. Ah, Italy!

If I devote a month twice a year to my wardrobe, it is only that I may not worry myself about it the rest of the time. Dresses are so stupid when one is occupied with them for their own sake; but, with me, dresses lead to costumes and costumes to history.

Wednesday, July 18th.—That one word, *Italy*, affects me as no word, no person has ever done.

Oh, when shall I be there?

I should be so angry if anyone thought that I wrote these *Ohs* and *Ahs* from affectation.

I don't know why it is that I imagine that I am not believed; in spite of all my asseverations, I sometimes think so, and it is both disagreeable and stupid.

You see, I want to make a change; I want to write very simply, and I fear that, when comparing my new style with my past exaggeration, people will not understand what I mean.

Since Naples, that is, since my journey to Russia, I have tried to improve myself, and it seems to me that I have, to a certain extent, succeeded.

I want to state things in a perfectly natural way, and if I add a few figures of speech, do not think it is for the purpose

Digitized by Google

of fine writing. Oh, no! it is simply to unravel, and to express, as clearly as possible, the confusion of my ideas.

It annoys me greatly not to be able to write anything pathetic! I would like so much to make others feel what I feel. I weep and I say *that I weep*. That is not what I want.

I want to be able to tell it all in such a way that it will touch your hearts.

That power will come, and other things with it, but it must not be sought for.

Thursday, July 26th.—I have been drawing nearly all day; to rest my eyes, I played the mandolin, then drawing again, and then the piano. There is nothing in the world like art, in all its branches, from the beginning up to the moment of the greatest development.

You forget everything to become absorbed in your work; you regard contours and shadows with respect, with tenderness; you create, you feel yourself almost great.

I am afraid of hurting my eyes, and I have not read in the evening for three days. Lately, everything looks blurred at so short a distance as from the carriage to the curbstone.

It makes me uneasy. If, after losing my voice, I should be obliged to give up drawing and reading! But, in that case, I should not complain, because it would mean that all my troubles have been the fault of no one, but simply the will of God.

Monday, July 30th.—It is said that many young girls write their impressions, and that stupid *Vie Parisienne* speaks of it in a very contemptuous manner. I hope that I am not one of those envious, ignorant, unsexed beings, reeking through all the pores with mystery and depravity.

Fauvel has stopped my excursions to Enghien, and will, perhaps, send me to Germany, which would again turn everything upside down. Walitzky is a skillful doctor, and understands all diseases. I had hoped that he was mistaken in advising me to go to Soden, but Fauvel is of the same opinion.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, August 1st.—"Two sentiments are common to lofty and affectionate natures; extreme sensitiveness to the opinion of others, and extreme bitterness when that opinion is unjust."

Who was the adorable creature who wrote that? I have forgotten, but I have already quoted the lines, a year ago, and I beg you to think of them sometimes in thinking of me.

Sunday, August 5th.—When one is in need of bread, one really does not dare to speak of sweetmeats. So, at present, I am ashamed to speak of my artistic hopes. I no longer dare to say that to do better work I would like such or such arrangements, that I want to study in Italy. All this is very painful for me to say.

Even if I should be granted *all*, I think I could no longer be so happy as I would have been once.

Confidence once lost is never restored, and this truth, like everything that is irreparable, saddens me unspeakably.

I am disappointed and sad, I notice nothing, nobody; my face is careworn, which takes away the trusting expression I once had, and makes me look ugly. I no longer have anything to say; my friends look at me with astonishment at first, and then go away. Then I try to be amusing, and I become queer, extravagant, impertinent, and stupid.

Monday, August 6th.—Do you think that I am not uneasy about Russia? Where is the being unhappy enough, contemptible enough, to forget his country when in danger? Do you think that the fable of the hare and the tortoise, when applied to Russia and Turkey, does not trouble me? Because I speak of this, that, and the other, does that prove that I am not uneasy, seriously uneasy about our war?

Do you think that 100,000 slaughtered Russians would be lying dead, if my prayers could have saved them, my anxious thoughts defended them?

Tuesday, August 7th.—I have been stupefying myself at the *Bon Marché*, which pleases me as everything that is well

Digitized by Google

managed does. We had guests to supper with us; they laughed and I laughed, but still—I am sad, despairing.

AND IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!! Frightful words! Hideous, horrible words!! To die, my God, to die!!! To die!!!! Without leaving anything behind me! To die like a dog! To die, as a hundred thousand women have died, with scarcely their names engraved upon their tombs! To die like— Fool, fool, who does not see what is God's will! God wishes me to renounce everything else and consecrate myself to art. In five years, I shall still be quite young, still beautiful, perhaps. But, suppose I become only a mediocre artist, as so many others have been?

With society, that might answer; but to devote one's life to some special thing and not to succeed!

In Paris, as everywhere else, there is a Russian colony.

It is not these mean considerations that enrage me, but it is that, mean as they are, they make me desperate and prevent me from thinking of my greatness.

What is life without society? What can one do when always alone? This thought makes me hate the whole world, my family, myself; it makes me blaspheme! To live! To live! Holy Mary, Mother of God, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, come to my aid!

But, if I am to consecrate myself to the arts, I must go to Italy! Yes, to Rome.

This is the granite wall against which I dash my head every moment.

I will remain here.

Sunday, August 12th.—I have sketched the portrait of the chambermaid of the house, Antoinette. She has a charming face with large, sparkling, blue eyes, and a lovely, innocent expression. But—the sketch is always successful—to know how to finish the picture, one must have studied.

Friday, August 17th.—I am convinced that I can not live away from Rome. In fact, my health is failing visibly, but it

Digitized by Google

is beyond my power to do anything. I would give two years of my life if I had never been in Rome.

Unfortunately, we only learn how to act, when there is no longer any occasion for acting.

Painting drives me wild! Because, in my nature, there is stuff which might be made to accomplish marvels, and I am, as far as studying goes, more unfortunate than the first street-boy, in whom talent is noticed and who is sent to school. However, I have this hope to console me: That posterity, enraged at having lost what I might have created, will cut off the heads of all my family.

Do you think that I still desire TO GO INTO SOCIETY? No, no longer. I am soured and disappointed, and I desire to become an artist for the same reason that malcontents become Republicans.

I think, after all, though, that I am slandering myself.

Saturday, August 18th.—When I read Homer, I compared my aunt when she was angry to Hecuba at the burning of Troy. However stupid one may be, or ashamed to confess his admiration for the classics, no one, it seems to me, can escape from a certain adoration of the ancients. You may say that it is repugnant to repeat always the same thing; you may say that you are afraid to appear to transcribe what you have read in *professional* admirers, or to say over again the words of your teacher, but the fact is, that, especially in Paris, one does not dare to speak of these things, one really does not dare.

And yet, no modern drama, no novel, no sensational comedy by Dumas or George Sand, ever left so clear, deep, and real an impression upon my mind as the description of the Siege of Troy.

It seems to me that I was present at those horrors, that I heard the cries, was with Priam's family, with those unfortunates who hid themselves behind the altars of their gods, where the sinister flames of the fire which devoured their city came to seek them and end their sufferings.

Digitized by Google

And who can help a slight shudder in reading of the appearance of Creusa's ghost?

But when I think of Hector, who had come below the ramparts with such excellent intentions, flying before Achilles, and chased three times around the walls—I laugh!

And the hero who passed a thong about the feet of his dead enemy and dragged him this time about the same ramparts! I imagine a horrible street urchin, galloping on a stick for a horse, and with an enormous wooden sword at his side.

I do not know, but it seems to me that in Rome alone can I satisfy my dreams of all things.

In Rome, one is at the summit of the world.

I have thrown aside in disgust the "*Journal d'un Diplomate en Italie*"—the French daintiness of style, the politeness, the commonplace expressions of admiration offend me, when applied to Rome. To me a Frenchman always has the air of dissecting things with a long instrument held delicately between his fingers, and with eye-glasses upon his nose.

Rome ought to be, as a city, what I could imagine myself to be as a woman. Any expression that has been used before and in description of others, applied to *us* is a profanation.

Sunday, August 19th.—I have been reading "Ariadne," by Ouida. The book has saddened me, and yet I almost envy the lot of Gioja.

Gioja was brought up on a diet of "Homer and Virgil." After her father's death, she went on foot to Rome. There, a terrible disappointment awaited her, for she had expected the Rome of Augustus.

For two years she studied in the studio of Marix, the most celebrated sculptor of the time, and who unwittingly fell in love with her. But she thought of nothing but her art, until there appeared in her life Hilarion, a poet who made the whole world weep with his poems, and who, himself, turned everything into ridicule; a millionaire, as beautiful as a god,

Digitized by Google

and adored by everybody. While Marix adores in silence, Hilarion makes himself loved out of caprice.

The ending of the story is very sad, and yet I would, without hesitation, accept Gioja's fate. In the first place, she worshiped Rome, and then she loved with all her soul. And although she was abandoned, it was by *him*, and, if she suffered, it was because of him. I do not understand how anyone can be unhappy at anything that comes from the hand of the man one loves, as she loved, and as I could love, if I ever do love.

She never knew that he had sought her love only from a whim.

"He loved me," she said, "and I should have known how to keep him."

She achieved fame. Her name was repeated with an admiration mingled with amazement.

She never ceased to love him, and he never descended to the ranks of other men in her eyes; she always thought him perfect, almost immortal, and she did not wish to die *then*, "because he is alive." "How can one kill one's self," she asks, "when the man one loves is still alive?"

And she died in his arms, with his voice murmuring in her ears: "I love you."

But to love like that, one must find an Hilarion. The man one loves in that way must be the descendant of a great family. Hilarion was the son of an Austrian nobleman and a Greek princess. The man one loves like that must never have need of money; he must be no weak player in the game of life, or a man afraid of anything in the world.

When Gioja knelt down and kissed his feet, I like to believe that his nails were pink and that he had no corns.

There comes in my terrible realism!

This man, finally, must never find the doors of palace or club barred to him; never be forced to hesitate before a statue he wishes to purchase, or to experience the vexation of

Digitized by Google

not being able to do something he wants to do, no matter how foolish that something may be. He must be cowardly only in love; but cowardly like Hilarion, who could break a woman's heart with a smile, but who would shed tears to see a woman want for anything.

It is not at all incomprehensible. *How do men break hearts?* By not loving at all, or too much. Is it a voluntary act? Can they help it? No. Well, there is no use, then, in reproaching them in the stupid manner that is the usual custom.

They are reproached by people who do not stop to think.

Such a man should always have a palace ready for him in all parts of the world, a yacht to carry him wherever his fancy lists, jewels to deck out a woman, servants, horses, flute-players, even; oh, everything!

But this is only a story! Very true; but then this love is also an invention. You will tell me that one loves men who make 1,200 francs a year, or who are in receipt of an income of 25,000 francs, who economize in gloves and calculate the number of guests; but it is not the thing I mean. Oh, not at all, not at all!

In such cases one is in love, one is desperate, one poisons one's self, one kills one's rival or the faithless lover himself; or, perhaps, one becomes resigned. But this is not the slightest like the love I am imagining, not the slightest!

Sensitive as I am, the least thing makes me shiver.

"Marix and Crispin had sworn to kill him, but she did not understand revenge. 'To avenge myself for what?' she said, 'there is nothing to be avenged.' And when Marix cast himself at her feet and swore to be a friend and an avenger, she turned aside with horror and disgust. 'My friend?' she said, 'and you wish him evil?'"

I can understand how one could wish death to a man one *has loved*, but not to a man one *loves*.

I shall never love in the way I can imagine, if I find only what I have already seen. I should be too humiliated in *him*.

Digitized by Google

Think of it! Lodged in a second-floor apartment with his parents! And I would wager (from what I know through Visconti) that his mother gives him clean sheets only twice a month.

But you must turn to Balzac for these microscopic analyses; my feeble, miserable efforts will never make me understood.

Thursday, August 23d.—I am at Schlangenbad! How and why? Listen. Because, for some reason or other, I don't like to be separated from my family; and, since we must suffer, it is better to suffer together.

The family are lodged in a sort of pension at Schlangenbad, but as I have had more than enough of the Baroness' pension, I said that I wanted to have rooms at the Badehaus, which is the best place here.

My aunt and I, therefore, took two rooms at the Badehaus; it is convenient for my baths.

Fauvel has ordered rest, and I have it here. But I don't think that I am yet cured, and in disagreeable things I am never mistaken.

I shall soon be eighteen. That is little for people who are thirty-five, but it is much for me, who, in the few months of my existence as a young girl, have had little pleasure and many sorrows.

Art! If I had not in the future those three magic letters, I should have died long ago.

But for Art, one has no need of any one, one depends only on one's self, and, if one fails, one is worthless and ought not to live. Art! I imagine it as a great light away off in the distance, and I will forget everything else and press on with my eyes fixed upon that light. And now—oh! no! no! now, my God! do not frighten me! Something horrible tells me that—Ah, no, I will not write it, I do not wish to bring ill-luck upon myself! Oh, God—I will try and if— Then there will be no more to be said—and—may the will of God be done!

I was at Schlangenbad two years ago. What a difference!

Digitized by Google

Then, I had all hopes; now, I have none.

Uncle Etienne is, as then, with us, and he has a parrot as he did two years ago. The same Rhine, the same vineyards, the same ruins, castles, and old towers with legends attached to them; and here, at Schlangenbad, delightful balconies, like nests of verdure; but neither ruins, nor pretty, new houses charmed me. I recognize merit, charm, beauty, where there is any, but I can love nothing except *below there.*

And, besides, what is there in the world comparable to that sunny land? I do not know how to express it, but poets have stated it and wise men proved it, before me.

Thanks to my habit of carrying with me "a heap of useless things," I can make myself at home anywhere, at the end of an hour; my dressing-case, my writing materials, a few good big books, my *great work*, and my pictures. That is all. But, with those, I can make any hotel-room comfortable. What I care the most for, are my four, big, red dictionaries, my big, green Livy, a small Dante, a medium-sized Lamartine, and my likeness, cabinet size, painted in oil, framed in dark-blue velvet, and encased in a Russia leather case.

With these, my bureau has at once an air of elegance, and the two candles, shedding their light upon the warm and pleasant colors, almost reconcile me to Germany.

Dina is so good, so sweet! How much I would like to see her happy! And one word here! Nevertheless, what a villainous humbug is the life of certain persons!

Monday, August 27th.—I have added a sentence to my evening prayer, five words: Protect our armies; oh, God!

I might say, truly, that I am anxious; but, in the presence of such vast interests, what am I to say—anything? I detest inactive compassion. I could not speak of our war as I could of any ordinary subject. I limit myself to *unswervably* admiring our imperial family, our grand dukes and our poor dear Emperor.

They say we are not doing well. I would like to see the

Digitized by Google

Prussians in that wild, arid country, filled with traitors and ambushes! Those excellent Prussians marched through a rich and fertile country like France, where at every moment they found cities and towns, with plenty for them to eat, drink, and steal. I would like to see them in the Balkans!

Without taking into account that we ourselves are fighting, while they, for the most part bought men, and then let them be butchered.

Our soldiers die like disciplined brutes, say those who are prejudiced; like heroes, say honest people.

But everyone is agreed in saying that no one has ever fought as the Russians are fighting now. History will verify that.

Wednesday, August 29th.—As I had been a long time troubled by an obscure point regarding the changing from an empire to a kingdom and the final dividing up of Italy, I took one of Amédée Thierry's books and went into the woods where I read, sought, and found what I wanted; then I wandered forth in search of adventure, not knowing where I went, and vainly imagining encounters like the one I described last year.

The Russians go from bad to worse. The news from the seat of war is, that the defile of Chipka is still in the hands of the Russians; to-morrow, we shall know the result of the decisive battle. I immediately made a vow not to speak a word until to-morrow, so that our side may win.

At eighteen this is an absurdity! The talents, the hopes, the manners, the caprices of my "salad age" have become ridiculous at eighteen. To begin painting at eighteen when one has pretended before to be able to do everything and even better than others!

There are some who deceive others; I have deceived myself.

Thursday, August 30th.—I did not speak a word, and this evening at Wiesbaden we learned that the Russians have Chipka, that the Turks are beaten (at least for the moment), and that great reinforcements are coming to our aid.

Saturday, September 1st.—I am much alone, reading and

Digitized by Google

thinking, with no one to direct me. Perhaps this is well, but perhaps also it is bad.

What guarantee have I that I am not eaten up with sophisms and filled with erroneous ideas? That is a question that will be decided after my death.

Forgive—Forgiveness. There are a verb and a noun much used in this world. Christianity commands us to forgive.

What is forgiveness?

It is the renunciation of vengeance or the desire to punish. But when we had the intention neither of avenging ourselves nor of punishing, can we *forgive?* Yes, and no. *Yes*, because we assure ourselves and others of the fact, and we act as if the offense had never been committed. *No*, because we are not masters of our memories, and so long as we *remember*, we have not *forgiven.*

I passed the whole day in the house with my family, and I mended, with my own hands, a Russia leather shoe belonging to Dina; then I washed a large wooden table, as any chambermaid might have done, and upon the table I set to work to make *Varéniki* (a paste made of flour, water, and fresh cheese). The family were amused to see me kneading the moistened flour, with my sleeves rolled up, and upon my head a black-velvet cap, like the one *Faust* wears.

Then I put on a waterproof and went with Dina to the Tyrolese girl's, who sells a host of little things. I asked her for M—'s head. She looked bewildered, so I bought a bear and we came home.

Sunday, September 2d.—How can people, who are free to do as they please, spend a day in Wiesbaden?

We went there, nevertheless, to see the most ridiculous nation on earth celebrate the defeat of the most cultured.

I was sleepy, and drank, from time to time, black coffee to keep me awake.

Thursday, September 6th.—I will stay in Paris. That I have finally resolved upon, and my mother will be with me. We

Digitized by Google

will not quarrel; and it would be a very good arrangement if she were not ill, especially in the evening. She has scarcely left her bed since yesterday.

I have decided to remain in Paris, where I will pursue my studies, and in the summer go to some watering-place for relaxation. All my caprices are at an end. Russia did me good, and I am now completely reformed. And I feel that the time has finally come for me to check my course. With my abilities, in two years I shall make up for lost time.

And so, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen! and may the Divine protection be with me! This is not an ephemeral decision like so many others, but a final one.

Sunday, September 9th.—I have been crying to-day. The beginning of my troubled life grieves me. May God preserve me from being regarded as a misunderstood divinity, but I am unhappy! Many times I have almost thought myself as "stricken by an evil genius," and each time I have revolted against this horrible thought:

Nunquam anathematis vinculis exuenda!

There are some who succeed in everything, while with others everything goes wrong. Against the truth of this, nothing can be said, and that is just the horror of the thing!

I might have worked seriously for the past three years, but at thirteen I was running after the shadow of the Duke of H—, a deplorable thing to admit. I do not accuse myself, because I did not know how I was wasting my time. I regret it, but I do not reproach myself at all. The combined circumstances of my unrestricted freedom and my ignorance; my exaltation which I believed to be skepticism acquired by an experience of forty years, have stranded me, I know not where nor how! Others, under the same circumstances, might have met with something to lean upon which would have permitted them to work at Rome or elsewhere, or a marriage; but I had nothing.

Digitized by Google

I do not regret having lived in my own way; it would be strange to regret it, knowing well that no advice would have deterred me. I believe only what I experience.

Monday, September 10th.—To-morrow, we leave. I love Schlangenbad. The trees are magnificent, and the air soft. We meet no one unless we wish it.

I know all the paths, all the walks. One might be happy if only contented at Schlangenbad.

My mother and my aunt do not understand me. In my desire to go to Rome, they see the Promenades of the Pincio, the opera, and "lessons in painting." And if I were to pass my life in explaining my enthusiasm, they might perhaps understand it, but as being something useless, a whim of mine. Little everyday troubles have absorbed them, and then we must be born with a passion for those things, otherwise we never understand, however intelligent, superior, and eminent we may be. But perhaps I am the one who is stupid!

I wish I were a fatalist.

Paris, Wednesday, September 19th.—I have been reading over my follies with A—, and I fear very much to be taken for an idiot, or a person who is a little light. What am I saying? Light, no! I belong to a respectable family.

I was only stupid. Do not think I call myself stupid from prudery or coquettishness. I say it with the most profound sorrow, for I am convinced of it.

And it was I who wished to conquer the world! At seventeen, I am a *blasé* being—no one knows what I am; but I know that I am stupid; A— is witness to it.

And yet, when I speak, I have wit; never, when needed, it is true, but—

Thursday, September 20th.—Friday, September 21st.—Profound disgust with myself! I hate all I have done, said, or written. I detest myself because I have fulfilled none of my hopes. I deceived myself.

I am stupid; I have no tact, and have never had any. Point

Digitized by Google

out one intelligent word or one reasonable action of mine. Nothing but stupidities! I thought myself witty; I am absurd. I thought myself daring, and I am timid. I thought I had talent, and I do not know to what purpose I have applied it. And with that, the pretension of writing charming things. Ah, heavens! you may take what I have just said for wit; it sounds like it, but it is not. I have discretion enough to judge myself accurately, which seems like modesty, and a lot of other things. I hate myself!

Saturday, September 22d.—I do not know how it is, but I believe I wish to remain in Paris. I believe that one year spent at Julian's studio would form a good basis for my future work.

Tuesday, October 2d.—To-day, we removed to 71 Champs Elysées. Notwithstanding all the confusion, I had time to go to the Julian studio, the only serious one for women. We work from 8 o'clock to noon, and from 1 to 5 o'clock. A nude man was posing, when Monsieur Julian conducted me into the room.

Wednesday, October 3d.—Wednesday being a favorable day for me, and there being in this date no four which is always unfavorable for me, I hastened to commence as many things as possible.

I sketched in pencil a three-quarter head in ten minutes, and Julian told me he did not expect so much in a beginner. I left early; I wished simply to make a beginning to-day. We went to the Bois. I gathered five oak leaves and took them to Doucet, who, in half an hour, had made me a delicious little blue scapular. But what can I desire? To be a millionaire? To recover my voice? Obtain the *Prix de Rome* under the name of a man? Marry Napoleon IV.? Enter into the great world?

I desire the prompt return of my voice.

Thursday, October 4th.—The day passes quickly when we sketch from 8 to 12 and 1 to 5 o'clock. The distance alone

Digitized by Google

requires one hour and a half, and, besides, I was a little late, so I had but six hours of work.

When I think of the years—entire years—I have lost! Through rage, I am tempted to throw up everything, and attempt nothing; but that would only make matters still worse. Come now, miserable and detestable being, be contented to have at last made a beginning! At the age of thirteen, I might have commenced! Four years!

I might now be painting historical pictures, had I begun four years ago. What I know, only retards me; I must commence all over again.

I was obliged to do, twice, the outlines of the head I was sketching, before giving satisfaction. As to the academy figure, that was very easy, and Monsieur Julian did not correct one line. As he was not there when I arrived, a pupil told me how to commence. I had never seen an academy figure.

All I had done until now was but a foolish loss of time!

At last I work with artists—real artists who have had their works exhibited at the *Salon*, and who are paid for their paintings and their portraits, who even give lessons.

Julian was pleased with my first attempt. "At the end of the winter, you will be able to make very fine portraits," he said to me.

He said that, among his pupils, women were sometimes as capable as the men. I would have worked with the latter, but they smoke, and besides, there is no difference. There was a difference when the women had only the dressed model; but since they do the academy figure—the nude man—there is none.

The maid at the studio is like those described in novels.

"I have always been with artists," she said; "I am no longer *bourgeoise*, I am an artist."

I am contented, contented!

Friday, October 5th.—"You did that alone?" asked Monsieur Julian, coming into the studio.

Digitized by Google

"Yes, Monsieur."

I blushed as if I were lying.

"Well done! I am much pleased, very much pleased."

"Yes?"

"Entirely satisfied."

And I, then! Then followed some advice. I was still dazzled by the superiority of the others over me, but I was already less timid. They were all women who had had three or four years of serious work in a studio, and at the Louvre.

Saturday, October 6th.—I have seen no one since I have been at the studio.

"Rest assured," said Julian to me, "you will not be long serving your apprenticeship."

And when mamma came after me, at 5 o'clock, he said something like this to her:

"I believed it was the whim of a spoiled child, but I must admit that she really works, that she is gifted and determined. If this continues, in three months her drawings can be received at the *Salon*."

Whenever he came to correct my drawing, he asked with a certain defiant tone, if I had done it alone.

I should think so, alone! I never asked the advice of any of the pupils, except when beginning my academy figure. I am becoming already accustomed to the manners of artists.

At the studio, all are equal; we have neither name nor family; we are no more the daughter of our mother, we are ourselves, we are an individual, and before us is art, and nothing else. We feel so contented, so free, so proud!

At last, I am as I have wished to be for so long a time. I desired it so long that I can not yet believe it has come.

By the way, do you know whom I met in the Champs Elysées?

None other than the Duke of H—, occupying an entire hackney coach. The handsome young man, somewhat stout, with copper-colored hair, and slight mustache, had become a

Digitized by Google

bulky Englishman, with a very flushed face, and small red whiskers extending from the ear to the middle of the cheek.

Four years, however, change a man. At the end of half an hour, I thought no more of him.

Sic transit gloria Ducis.

How foolish I was!

Monday, October 8th.—For the head, we had a new model, that is to say, in the morning. A sort of *café chantant* singer; she even sang during the intervals of rest. In the afternoon, we had a young girl for the academy figure.

They say she is only seventeen years old, but I assure you, her form is much impaired. It is said that those wenches lead an impossible life.

The pose was difficult; I had some trouble.

People are ashamed of their nudity, because they believe they are not perfect. If they were sure of having no blemish on their skin, no badly-formed muscles, nor deformed feet, they would walk about without clothing and without shame. We do not acknowledge it, but it is that and nothing else, we are ashamed of. Can we resist the temptation of showing any perfection of which we may be proud? From the time of King Candaule, who has ever kept to himself a treasure or a thing of beauty without boasting of it? However easily satisfied we may be with our face, we are instinctively exacting as to our body.

The sense of shame disappears only in the presence of perfection, beauty being omnipotent, and supreme beauty leaves in the mind no other feeling than that of admiration.

The girl at the studio had straight and pretty, but large, fingers; and her feet, although regular and not large, were stumpy-looking.

I said a little while ago that beauty was omnipotent, and it is the same with all things that are perfect.

Music which allows you to notice the defects in the *mise-en-scène* is not perfect. An heroic action which leaves room for

Digitized by Google

any sentiment but admiration, is not the greatest act of heroism of which you have dreamed. When what you see or hear is great enough to control your whole being, then it is almighty.

When, seeing a nude woman, you say to yourself it is wrong, then that woman is not a specimen of perfect beauty, since you have room for another idea than that which should enter the mind through the eyes. You forget beauty to remark nudity, the beauty not being complete enough to occupy you entirely. Then they who show themselves are ashamed, and you are shocked.

They are ashamed, knowing that others think it wrong; and if it were not thought wrong, they would not be ashamed.

Therefore: Perfection and absolute beauty destroy and even prevent the inception of blame, and consequently suppress the sense of shame.

Tuesday, October 9th.—I sketched my singer in close proximity. Having arrived late on Monday, I had the worst place in the studio for this week.

"It is not at all bad," said Julian; "I am even astonished that you have done so well. It is the most difficult pose, and how can you work so near? I see you will get on smoothly."

This is my world. My friends go out, attend theatres, and I sketch while awaiting the carnival at Naples, that is, if my ideas do not change and nothing unexpected intervenes.

Wednesday, October 10th.—Do not think that I am doing wonders because Monsieur Julian is astonished. He is astonished because he supposed it only the whim of a rich girl, and a beginner. I am wanting in experience, but what I do is true and life-like. As to execution, it is all it could be after eight days of work.

All my companions draw better than I do, but their work is not so true and life-like. What leads me to believe that I shall excel them, is that, while admitting their merits, I shall not be contented to be what they are, although beginners usually say: If I could but sketch as this or that one!

Digitized by Google

They have had practice, study, experience; but those girls of forty, will never do better than they do now. Those who are young, sketch well and have time before them, but no future.

I may not succeed, but it will be only through impatience. I shall kill myself with over-work to make up for those four lost years; it seems to me it is now too late.

We shall see.

Thursday, October 11th.—We may try to convince ourselves that it is useless to regret what is past; at every instant, I repeat: How well all would be if I had studied the last three years! I should now be a great artist, and I could, etc.

Monsieur Julian told the maid of the studio, that Schaeppi and I were his most promising pupils. You do not know who Schaeppi is? Schaeppi is the Swiss girl. Then Monsieur Julian added that I might become a great artist.

I heard all this from Rosalie.

It is so cold, I have become hoarse, but I forgive all, provided I can draw.

And draw, why?

To compensate me for all that I have been deprived of since the commencement of the world! For all that I have wanted and still want! To succeed by my talent, by—by whatever you wish, but to succeed! But if I had everything I want, perhaps I would do nothing!

Friday, October 12th.—"Do you know, Monsieur," I said to Julian, "I am entirely discouraged. A lady told me yesterday that there was no use in my working, as I had no talent."

"A lady said that to you?"

"Why yes, and seriously."

"Well, you may tell her that in three months—three months is not very long—that in three months you will draw her portrait—face, three-quarters, or profile, in short, whatever she may wish, and a portrait not badly done, do you understand? Resembling and not badly done? Well, she will see. In three months, and if I say it here, that all those

Digitized by Google

ladies may hear me, it is that I am not saying anything very remarkable, but what will surely happen."

These were his very words, spoken with a Marseillais accent, which twenty years of Paris have not completely effaced—and so much the better. I love the Southern accent.

Saturday, October 13th.—It is on Saturday that Monsieur Tony Robert-Fleury, the artist who painted "The Last Days of Corinth," which has been purchased by the State and placed in the Luxembourg, comes to our studio. Moreover, the first artists of Paris come, from time to time, to give us advice.

I had commenced on Wednesday, and Saturday of the same week he was unable to come, so this was the first time for me. When he reached my easel, and was beginning his observations, I interrupted him.

"Pardon me, Monsieur, I began only ten days ago."

"Where did you draw before then?" he asked, looking at my drawing.

"Why, nowhere."

"How, nowhere?"

"Yes, I took thirty-two lessons in painting to amuse myself."

"We do not call that studying."

"I know, Monsieur, therefore—"

"You had never sketched from nature before coming here?"

"Never, Monsieur."

"It is not possible!"

"But I assure you—"

"You have never had any advice?"

"Yes; four years ago I took lessons as a little girl. I copied engravings."

"That is nothing; I did not mean that."

And as he still appeared incredulous, I added: "I will give you my word of honor, if you wish it."

"Then you have very extraordinary talent. You are particularly gifted, and I advise you to work."

Digitized by Google

"I have done nothing but that for the last ten days. Do you wish to see what I have done before this head?"

"Yes. I will finish with these young ladies and then return."

"Well," said he, after having visited three or four easels, "let me see, Mademoiselle."

"Here, Monsieur," I said, commencing with the head of Archangélo, but when I wished to show him only two, he said:

"No, no; show me all you have done."

I then showed him my unfinished academy figure, commenced last Thursday; the head of the singer, in which he found much character; a foot; a hand, and the academy figure of Augustine.

"You made that academy figure alone?"

"Yes, and I had not only never made, but had never seen academy figures."

He was smiling and did not seem to believe me, so I again gave him my word of honor, and he repeated:

"It is astonishing, you have extraordinary talent. This academy figure is not at all bad—not at all—and that part is even finely done. Work, Mademoiselle," etc.

Then followed some advice. The others heard all and I excited jealousy, because none of them had received anything equivalent—they, pupils of one, two, three years, who make academy figures with splendid models and who painted at the Louvre! Undoubtedly, more is expected of them than of me; but still they might have been told the equivalent in another way.

It is then true, and I—I will say nothing; it would only bring ill-luck—but I commend myself to God. I fear so much!

All this cost me, during the afternoon, a chiding in the third person. The Spaniard—good enough girl, the most obliging in the world, with a rage for painting in her head, making her

Digitized by Google

somewhat unjust—this Spaniard, speaking of a Hollander, said, when first coming into the studio, we always caused astonishment by making rapid progress; that this little, which is a great deal to those who know nothing, is quickly acquired; that it is only when we know something, that we have the most to learn.

There are but two or three beginners at present! Do they progress as I do?

Let us resume and conclude the story of my success.

"Well, Mademoiselle?" exclaimed Julian, crossing his arms before me.

I was somewhat frightened and asked him, blushing, what was the matter.

"Why, it is magnificent! You work on Saturday until night, when everybody else takes a holiday!"

"Yes, Monsieur, I have nothing else to do and I must do something."

"It is beautiful. You know that Monsieur Robert-Fleury was not at all displeased with you?"

"Yes, he told me so."

"Poor Robert-Fleury, he is still ailing somewhat."

And the master, placing himself beside me, began to converse—which he rarely does with any of his pupils, and which is a great compliment.

After his visit with us, that poor Robert-Fleury talked with that good Julian. Therefore, I wished to know something more, expecting only flattering things.

I went to the master as he finished correcting the drawing of an adorable little blonde, who was commencing in the supplementary room.

"Monsieur Julian, tell me what Monsieur Robert-Fleury said of me. I know that I know nothing, but he could judge —a little, how I am commencing, and if—"

"If you knew what he said to me of you, Mademoiselle, you would blush a little."

Digitized by Google

"Go on, Monsieur, I will try to listen without too much—"

"He told me it was very intelligently done, that—"

"He would not believe that I had never sketched."

"No, indeed. In speaking to me he was still a little incredulous, so I told him how you made that head of Archangélo, which I made you do over again. You remember, it was all like—in short, like someone who knows nothing."

"Yes, Monsieur."

And we laughed. Ah! it was so amusing.

Now that the surprises, astonishments, encouragements, incredulities, all those ecstatic things for me are passed, now work begins.

Madame D— dined with us. I was calm, reserved, silent, and scarcely amiable. I have no thoughts but of drawing.

While writing, I stopped and thought of all the work required, of the time, patience, and difficulties.

We do not become great artists through talent and genius alone, there is always that pitiless mechanical work— And a voice has said to me: You will feel neither time, nor difficulties, and you will succeed without suspecting it!

And I believe in that voice! It has never deceived me, and it has announced me too many misfortunes to mislead me now. I believe in it and I feel that I have cause to believe in it.

I shall take the *Prix de Rome!*

Monday, October 15th.—The following were our models for the week:

In the morning, an eleven-year-old child, with hair of a rusty copper color, very interesting for the head.

In the afternoon, a man, named Percichini for the academy figure.

In the evening—for the night courses began this evening, from 8 to 10 o'clock—another man, also for the academy figure.

Monsieur Julian was amazed to see me there. In the evening he worked with us, and I was much amused.

Digitized by Google

We talked pleasantly on politics and other things. The current topics were the subject of many piquant remarks. But, as he would not give his opinion, I played for him the "Marseillaise."

Let me see, how many were we this evening? Myself, the Polonaise, Farhammer, a French girl, Amélie (the Spaniard), an American, and the master.

Dina was there. It is so interesting. The light strikes the model so well—the shadows are so simple.

Tuesday, October 16th.—Monsieur Robert-Fleury came during the afternoon, and accorded me particular attention.

As usual, I spent the whole day at the studio, from 9 o'clock to half-past 12. I have not yet succeeded in getting there at 8.

At noon, I leave, breakfast, and return at twenty minutes past 1, and remain until 5 o'clock, and at night from 8 to 10; which makes nine hours a day.

This does not tire me in the least; if I could do more, I would. There are people who call this work. I assure you I consider it play—I say it without boasting. Nine hours are so little, and to think I can not do so every day, because it is so far from the Champs Elysées to the Rue Vivienne, and then because, often, no one will accompany me in the evening, which obliges me to return at half-past 6, and as I do not go to sleep until midnight, the next day I lose an hour. However, in attending the course regularly, from 8 to 12, and 1 to 5, I will have eight hours.

In the winter it will be dark at 4. Ah! well, then I will certainly go at night.

We always have the coupé for the morning, and the landau for the rest of the day.

So you see I must do the work of three years in one; and, as I go fast, these three years in one will represent six years of the work of a person of ordinary intelligence.

I am talking like those imbeciles who say: "What another

Digitized by Google

can do in two years, she will do in six months." That is all erroneous.

It is not a question of speed. If that were the case, we should have but to spend the necessary time. Undoubtedly, with patience, we would attain a certain result. But, what I could do at the end of one or two years, the Danish girl could never do. When I begin to redress the errors of humanity, I confuse and irritate myself, because I never have the patience to finish a sentence completely.

In short, if I had commenced three years ago, I could be satisfied with six hours a day; but now I must have nine, ten, twelve—in short, as many as possible. Indeed, had I commenced three years ago, it would still be better for me to work as much as possible; but, after all, what is past is past.

Gordigiani told me he worked twelve hours a day.

From twenty-four hours let us take seven for sleeping, two for undressing, praying, washing the hands several times, dressing, combing—all that, in fact; two for eating and breathing a little, that makes eleven hours.

It is true, thirteen remain.

Yes, but the going and coming take me an hour and a quarter.

Well, yes, I lose about three hours.

When I shall work at home, I will lose them no longer. And then—and then—if there are people to see—the Promenade, the theatre!

I shall try to avoid all that, for, to the extent that I enjoy them, they are only an annoyance.

Thursday, October 18th.—My academy figure seemed so satisfactory to Julian, that he said it was altogether extraordinary and prodigious for a beginner. Perhaps it is not astonishing, but there is, at all events, method—and the torso is not bad; it is really well proportioned for a beginner.

All the pupils came to look at my drawing, while I blushed.

Heavens! I am so pleased.

Digitized by Google

The academy figure of the evening was so bad that Monsieur Julian advised me to do it over again. Wishing to do too well, I spoiled it this evening. Day before yesterday, it was not bad.

Saturday, October 20th.—Breslau received many compliments from Robert-Fleury, I none. The academy figure was good enough, but not the head. I ask myself, in terror, when I shall succeed in drawing well.

It is just fifteen days that I have worked—of course, excepting the two Sundays. Fifteen days!

Breslau has been at the studio for two years. She is twenty years old, I am seventeen; but Breslau sketched a great deal before coming here.

And I? Wretch!

I have sketched for only fifteen days.

How well that Breslau sketches!

Monday, October 22d.—The model was ugly, and the whole studio refused to make it. I proposed that we should go to see the *Prix de Rome*, exhibited at the Beaux-Arts. Half went on foot, and we, Breslau, Madame Simonides, Zilhardt, and myself, in a carriage.

We found that the Exposition had closed yesterday. We walked on the quays; we looked at old books and old engravings, and talked art. Then, in an *open hired carriage*, we went to the Bois. Can you fancy me doing such a thing? But I did not wish to object, it would have spoiled their pleasure. They were so pleasant and agreeable; we are just beginning to become acquainted. In short, all would have gone well, if we had not met my family in the landau, and they followed us.

I made a sign to the coachman to remain behind, they saw me and I knew it; but I did not care to speak to them before my artists. I had my cap on my head, and I looked dishevelled and embarrassed.

Naturally, my family was furious.

I was terribly bothered.

In short, an annoying incident.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, October 24th.—In the evening we had a well-formed young woman.

Monsieur Robert-Fleury came last night, and said I was wrong in missing the lesson, since I was one of the best workers. Monsieur Julian repeated this to me, in a very flattering manner.

It was very flattering that my absence should be remarked by a professor like Robert-Fleury.

In short, when I think that I might have worked for the last four years, at the least—at the least—and I think of it always!

Saturday, October 27th.—I received many compliments, as we say at the studio.

Monsieur Robert-Fleury expressed a satisfactory astonishment, and told me I was making surprising progress, and that, really, I had extraordinary talent.

"There are many who could not do as much with so little practice. This sketch is very well done—let us understand each other—very well done for you. I advise you to work, Mademoiselle, and if you work, I assure you that you will achieve something not at all bad."

Not at all bad, were his exact words.

I believe he said: "There are many who have sketched more, and can not do as much," but I am not certain enough to write such a flattering phrase.

I had lost Pincio, and the poor animal, not knowing where to go, came to the studio, where he usually accompanies me. Pincio is a little Roman wolf-dog—white as snow, straight ears, eyes and nose black as ink.

I detest those little white, curly dogs.

Pincio is not at all curly; he poses so astonishingly, so gracefully, so like a deer on a rock, that I never saw anyone who did not admire him.

He is almost as intelligent as Rosalie is shallow. Rosalie has gone to her sister's wedding. She started this morning, after having accompanied me here.

Digitized by Google

"How is this, Rosalie," said mamma to her, "you left Mademoiselle alone at the studio?"

"Oh, no, Madame, Mademoiselle remained with Pincio."

I assure you she said this seriously.

But, as I am a little stupid, I lost or forgot my guardian.

Sunday, October 28th.—Schaeppi has commenced my portrait.

I never believed that such creatures as she existed. It would never enter her head, that a person who is congenial to her, could ever wear false hair and powder.

A man who does not always tell the naked truth is an impostor, a liar, a horror. She scorns him.

Yesterday, she and Breslau, thinking of my uneasiness (I was at breakfast), wished to bring Pincio to me immediately; but the Spaniard and others exclaimed that they were making servants of themselves for me, because I was rich. I questioned her closely as to what they thought of me at the studio.

"They would love you very much if you had less talent; but, as it is, they do nothing but criticise you when you are not there."

It will then be the same thing everywhere—I can never pass unnoticed, or as others! It is flattering and sad.

The Spaniard is a girl of twenty-five, who acknowledges but twenty-two. She has a passion for painting, and no talent. However, she is good, obliging to all. One would think she was paid to serve everybody and care for the studio. She trembles when Robert-Fleury or Julian pay attention to any of the pupils. She is jealous even of me who am just commencing and who do not know as much as she, certainly; but who, unfortunately, have some talent.

Saturday, November 3d.—Monsieur Robert-Fleury had already corrected all the others when I arrived. I presented my drawings to him, hiding behind his stool as usual. Ah well, I was forced to come out, he said so many agreeable things to me.

Digitized by Google

"The outlines are not perfect, undoubtedly, but it is astonishing in suppleness and truth. This movement is really very good. Now, of course, you are wanting in experience, but you have all that can not be learned. Do you understand? All that which can not be learned. What you have not, can be learned, and you will learn it. Yes, it is astonishing, and if you will only work, you will do very good things, I am sure of it."

"And I, also, Monsieur."

It is 2 o'clock—I am enjoying my Sunday. From time to time, I interrupt this historical chronicle to look at a study of anatomy and some rough sketches purchased yesterday.

Wednesday, November 7th.—It is gray and damp. I live only in the bad atmosphere of the studio. The city, the Bois, is death to me.

I do not work enough.

I am young, yes, very young I know, but for what I wanted, no—I wanted to be celebrated at the age I am now. I have foolishly and wrongly wished it, since I did nothing but wish.

I will reach success, when the most charming of the three periods of youth shall have passed away—that for which I wanted all. For me, there are three periods of youth: From sixteen to twenty, from twenty to twenty-five, and from twenty-five to—to whatever you wish. The other periods of youth which have been invented are only consolations and stupidities.

At thirty begins the mature age. After thirty, we may be beautiful, young—even younger; but it is no longer the same tobacco, as Alexandre Lautrec, son of the Wiesbaden man, used to say.

Thursday, November 8th.—There is but one thing which could tear me away from the studio before the time, and for the whole afternoon, and that is Versailles. As soon as the tickets were received, they sent Chocolate after me, and I went home to change my dress.

On the stairway, I met Julian who was astonished to see me leave so early. I explained, and told him that nothing but

Digitized by Google

Versailles could take me away from the studio. He replied that that was all the more praiseworthy, since I could so easily have amusements.

"I am amused only here, Monsieur."

"And you are right! In two months you will see how glad you will be that it is so."

"You know that I wish to become a very strong artist and that I do not sketch for pastime."

"Let us hope so! It would be using an ingot of gold as if it were brass, it would be a sin. I assure you that with the talent you have, as I see by the astonishing things that you do, it will not require more than a year and a half for you to paint really well."

"Oh!"

"I repeat it—really well."

"Take care, Monsieur, I shall go away enraptured."

"I speak the truth as you will see for yourself. At the close of this winter you will sketch perfectly well; then you will continue to draw, and I give you six months to familiarize yourself with the colors—to become an artist in short!"

Merciful heaven! While rolling toward the house, I smiled and wept with joy, and dreamed that I was receiving 5,000 francs per portrait.

Only ladies at the station and—until we were installed in the gallery we were miserable—it was raining.

I must not go very often to the Chamber; it might detach me from the studio. I should be apt to become interested and keep on going, each day being a new page of the same book. Politics could become for me such a passion that I would lose my sleep. But my politics are over there, in the Rue Vivienne, it is through there I shall reach the Chamber, but in another way. One year and a half! Why, it is nothing!

So much happiness frightens me.

A year and a half for portraits—but for paintings? Let us say two or three years—we shall see.

Digitized by Google

I was tired at 8 o'clock, but this did not prevent me from sketching at least for an hour.

Saturday, November 10th.—Monsieur Robert-Fleury was indisposed, tired—he corrected scarcely half of our drawings. Nobody received any compliments, not even myself. I was somewhat astonished, as Julian was satisfied with what I had done. Yes, but I was not quite pleased with it. I was grieved.

We then made rough sketches, one of mine was somewhat of a caricature and was a success. Julian made me sign it, and placed it in his album.

How much more disagreeable things affect us than good ones!

For a month, I have heard nothing but encouragements, save once, a fortnight ago; that morning, I was scolded and I remember only that morning, but it is always thus in everything. One thousand persons may applaud, and one alone will hiss or whistle, and he is heard above the thousand.

The academy figures of the afternoon and evening were not corrected. Ah! but I am excusable! you must remember that the models displeased me and that we did not commence until Tuesday. On Monday, there was some disorder because of the models, and then, moreover, I was placed in front of the man, very near and a little below. The most difficult pose. But no matter; it is a bad sign, my darling, when you try to make excuses.

Tuesday, November 13th.—The opinion of Monsieur Robert-Fleury is never in conformity with that of Julian, so that the latter often abstains from saying what he thinks. The gentlemen below have Robert-Fleury, Boulanger, and still another. We have Robert-Fleury only; it is not just.

There is to be a competition. First, a competition of places, that chance may not give a disadvantageous place to the best pupil, and the contrary to one who does not know how to make the best use of it. Then a competition of an entire week. There will be one every two months I believe, and Breslau advises

Digitized by Google

me strongly to compete for the places, which would be of use to me in two months if not now.

While awaiting the coupé, which was to come at a quarter to 8 this evening, I studied my rough sketch.

Wednesday, November 14th.—I went to the vicinity of the School of Medicine to obtain different books and plasters. At Vasser's—you know Vasser who sells all sorts of human forms, skeletons, etc.—I have friends there who spoke of me to Monsieur Mathias Duval, professor of anatomy at the Beaux-Arts, and to others, and someone will come to give me lessons.

I was enraptured. The streets were filled with students who were coming out of the schools; those narrow streets, those shops where musical instruments are made, all that, in short. Ah! I then understood the magic—if one can express it thus —of the Latin Quarter.

I am but the envelope of a woman, and that envelope is decidedly feminine; as to the rest, it is decidedly something else. I am not peculiar in this. I imagine that all women are like me.

Ah! speak of the Latin Quarter if you like. It is that which reconciles me to Paris. I could imagine myself far away, almost in Italy—of another sort.

People of the lower class—otherwise called the *bourgeoisie*—will never understand me; therefore, it is to *ours* that I address myself.

Wretched young people, read me!

So my mother is horrified to see me in a place where we see such things—oh, such things! "Naked peasants!" When I shall make a beautiful painting, you will see only the poetry, the flower, the fruit. You will never think of the manure.

I see but the aim, the end, and I walk toward that end.

I love to go to booksellers and people who—thanks to my modest costume—take me for a kind of Breslau. They look at me in a good-natured and encouraging manner, altogether different from formerly.

Digitized by Google

One morning, I went to the studio with Rosalie, in a cab. In payment, I gave the cabman a 20-franc piece.

"Oh, my poor child! I have no change."

It was so amusing!

Thursday, November 15th.—We had the competition for places, the outline of a head, to be done in one hour.

The decision will be given Saturday. I feel no uneasiness; besides, if I am last, it will be only justice. I have had thirty days of study, while the others average one year apiece—not to speak of those who have studied outside of this studio, studied seriously, being artists by profession.

That miserable Breslau causes me some uneasiness. She is admirably equipped, and I assure you she will get through, and not badly. I can not bring myself to understand that she has studied at Julian's for nearly five hundred days, and I only thirty days; that is to say that, at Julian's alone, she has studied more than fifteen times as much as I have. If I am truly gifted, in six months, I shall do as well as she. There are some astonishing things; but there are no miracles in all this, and I—I want miracles.

I am disappointed in not being a great artist at the end of a month.

Friday, November 16th.—I went to see poor Schaeppi, in a boarding-house in the Avenue-de-la-Grande-Armée.

An artistic mansard, and a neatness which gives it almost an air of opulence.

Breslau lodges there with several other artists.

Rough sketches, studies, and a lot of interesting things, the artistic contact, the atmosphere alone, did me good.

I can not forgive myself for not knowing as much as Breslau. It is that—I have never gone to the depths of anything in my life. I know a little of everything and I fear to do the same here; but no, from the way I am going, it will not be so! Not having done a thing before, is no reason why I shall never do anything. At every first attempt, I am incredulous.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, November 17th.—What displeases Monsieur Robert-Fleury most, is any want of resemblance; now, as I always catch resemblances easily, and as we never lose the qualities we possess, I am not uneasy.

The decision in the competition was given; there were eighteen competitors. I am the thirteenth; there are, then, five below me. It is not so bad. The Polonaise first; that is not just! I received compliments for my academy figures. I bought flayed figures, anatomies, skeletons, and all night I dreamed that corpses were brought to me for dissection.

But what can you expect, I am stupefied, my hands can only sketch and touch the harp.

But then, it is—absurd that Breslau should sketch better than I.

My outline was the most advanced.

"All that in one hour," exclaimed Monsieur Robert-Fleury, "why, she must be a demon!"

But then, I must tell you that Monsieur Julian and the others said, in the gentlemen's studio, that I had neither the hand, nor the manners, nor the disposition of a woman, and that they would like to know, if, in my family, there were anyone from whom I inherited so much talent, and strength, and tenacity for work.

All the same, is it not absurd that I can not yet paint pictures?

I can not place my characters well. I tried to sketch a scene of the studio. Well, it is not good, it does not look like anything. It is true that I made it purely from fancy, and that I paid no attention to the real characteristics of my figures. No—it is frightful!

Sunday, November 18th.—In the evening I made a rough sketch of my wash-stand, or rather, of Rosalie, in front of the wash-stand. It is quite life-like; the whole thing pleases me. When I can sketch better, I will do the same thing again, perhaps even in painting. There never was a sketch

Digitized by Google

of a wash-stand, with a maid in front of it, without love, without flowers, without a broken vase, without a feather-duster, etc.

Friday, November 23d.—That wretched Breslau has composed a picture: "Monday Morning, or the Choice of a Model." All the studio is in it, and Julian is beside me and Amélie, etc.

It is correctly done, the perspective is good; so are the likenesses, in fact everything.

When one can do a thing like that, one can not fail to become a great artist.

You guess, do you not? I am jealous. It is a good thing, because it will urge me on.

But I have sketched only six weeks. Breslau will always be before me, having commenced before. No, in two or three months, I shall know how to sketch as well as she does—that is to say, very well. I am glad, moreover, to find a rival worthy of me. With the others, I would have gone to sleep.

Ah! it is terrible to wish to draw like a master at the end of six weeks' study.

Grandpapa is sick. Dina is at her post full of self-denial and care. She is more beautiful than ever, and so good. If heaven does not send her a little happiness, I will say impertinent things to God.

Saturday, November 24th.—This evening, there were only Amélie, myself, and Julian, the maid, and Rosalie, at the studio.

Monsieur Julian sent for the competition sketches of the gentlemen, ours, and the caricatures of the gentlemen.

We began to examine and judge of our pictures, while awaiting the final decision, which will be given on Tuesday, by Robert-Fleury, Lefebvre, and Boulanger.

There will be a struggle between Breslau and a French girl (four years of studio, of profiles only, and no sacred fire, but a perfect drawing) and another one. Amélie, the Polonaise, and big Jenny have paintings. When Monsieur Julian reached my head, he said something like the following:

Digitized by Google

"You may be badly placed, because you are struggling against young girls who have spent three or four years in the studio and who are far advanced; but your head is simply a most striking resemblance. What you do is phenomenal. Take this sketch and carry it to whatever great master you wish, and ask him how long it requires to sketch thus from nature, and no one—no one you understand—will say less than one year. Still, indeed, it is full of faults—"

And he gave me a lesson by comparing my sketch with that of the French girl.

"And your academy figures are also full of faults, but there are no outrageous ones. Go and tell anyone that at the end of one month or six weeks, you make figures so true and life-like, and from nature, and they will say that you are laughing at them."

"But, then, Monsieur, I am not satisfied with myself!"

And I said it, with conviction, I assure you.

"Not satisfied?"

"No! I hope I shall do still better."

"If you continue, you will do extraordinary things. What you do, as I said before, is phenomenal."

He does not express himself thus before everybody; it would cause a revolution.

Yes, I shall undoubtedly be badly placed; those brutes do not know how little time I have studied and, not seeing the models, will not appreciate the resemblance.

I needed a little encouragement, for I assure you this morning my spirits were low.

Monday, November 26th.—At last I have taken my first lesson in anatomy, from 4 o'clock to half-past 4, immediately after my drawing.

Monsieur Cuyer teaches me; he was sent by Mathias Duval, who promised to take me to visit the school of arts. I commenced with the bones naturally, and one of my bureau drawers is filled with vertebræ—natural ones.

Digitized by Google

How hideous, when one thinks that the other two contain perfumed paper, visiting cards, etc.

Returning from the studio, I found Monsieur Cuyer waiting in the twilight of the parlor; on the sofa opposite, sat mamma and the most Swiss of commanders, Marcuard, returned for ten days, who kissed my hand covered with charcoal and—which had touched the vertebræ since I had stolen away from the parlor to take my lesson.

Tuesday, November 27th.—Monsieur Julian came to us somewhat discouraged after the decision of Robert-Fleury, Boulanger, and Lefebvre, and made the following speech:

"Ladies, the gentlemen have classed only six heads after the medal, which, as you already know, was won by Mademoiselle Delsarte (the French girl); the others are simply classified for places at the next competition, and the three last will draw lots, which, undoubtedly, is to prevent ill-feeling."

A voice told me that I would be one to draw lots; that would have been quite natural. I was much annoyed.

After this little speech which produced considerable impression on everybody, he added these words:

"I can not tell who did the heads. Will one of the ladies tell me? First. Whose is this?"

"Mademoiselle Wick."

"Second?"

"Mademoiselle Bang."

"Third?"

"Mademoiselle Breslau."

"Fourth?"

"Mademoiselle Nordtlander."

"Fifth?"

"Mademoiselle Farhammer."

"Sixth?"

"It is Mademoiselle Marie!" exclaimed the Polonaise.

"I, Monsieur?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle."

Digitized by Google

"Why, it is ridiculous!"

I am among the first six; Amélie, Zilhardt, the Polonaise are after me. I am the last comer at the studio, being here only since October 3d. *Sapristi!*

Everybody congratulated me. Mademoiselle Delsarte said very amiable things to me, and her sister Marie called us the two heroines of the competition.

"What you have accomplished in so short a time, is better than a medal after four years of study!"

A success, and what a charming success!

Friday, November 30th.—I have at last brought my mandolin to the studio, and that charming instrument charmed everybody, the more so, as, to those who have never heard it, I seem a good player. During the evening recess, as I was playing, accompanied on the piano by Amélie, the master entered and listened. Had you seen him, you would have seen an enraptured man.

"I, who thought the mandolin was a sort of guitar which was scraped. I did not know it could sing. I never imagined one could draw from it such melodious sounds. Ah! I will never speak badly of it again. I really enjoyed it. Ah! it is fine. You may laugh if you wish, but I assure you that it scrapes something in the heart. It is queer!"

Ah, wretch! then you feel it!

This same mandolin had no success, when, one evening at home, I played it for some society people (ladies and gentlemen), and they are people who always pay compliments. Many lights, heart-shaped waistcoats, rice-powder, all that destroys the charm; while the lights of the studio, the calm, the night, the dark stairway, the fatigue, dispose you to all there is in the world of sweetness, of mirth, of pleasure, of charm.

This is a terrible trade of mine. The long distance to go and eight hours of work a day; moreover, work both conscientious and intelligent. Yes; truly nothing is so stupid as

Digitized by Google

to sketch without thinking of what you are doing, without comparing, without remembering, without studying—that would not be fatiguing.

Were the days longer, I would work more, that I might return to Italy.

I must succeed.

Wednesday, December 5th.—It was dark all day; we could not sketch, so I went to the Louvre with a Finlander who looks like an English governess. I walked the whole distance, enchanted with the style of my otter bonnet and my long otter cloak, which touched the ground.

We learn something looking at beautiful things, when we are with someone who knows something.

Saturday, December 8th.—I went to the theatre; it was very amusing, and we laughed all the time—lost time which I regret.

I work badly this week.

There are many stories of the studio that I might relate; but I consider my studio only on its serious side, and think of nothing else, it would be beneath me. I regret this evening. I was not seen by any one and I did not study. I laughed, it is true, but that sort of satisfaction is of no use to me; therefore, it is disagreeable since it gives me no pleasure.

Sunday, December 9th.—Doctor Charcot has just gone. I was present at the consultation and I also heard what the doctors afterward said. Since I am the only one who is calm, I am considered as a third doctor. They anticipate no fatal result at present.

Poor grandpapa! I should have been grieved if he had died now, because we have often quarreled; but as his illness will be long, I have time to make up for my hasty temper. I remained in his room when he was at his worst—my presence near the sick is always a sign that the illness is serious, because I detest useless eagerness, and it is only when I allow myself that I appear troubled.

Digitized by Google

You see how I always praise myself at every opportunity.

I saw the new moon over my left shoulder. It annoys me.

Do not think that I was ever brutal to grandpapa. I only treated him as an equal; but now that he is ill, very ill, I regret it and wish I had endured everything without a word.

We never leave him, as he immediately calls the missing one. George is near him, and Dina, of course, is never far from the bedside. Mamma is ill of uneasiness. Walitzky, that dear Walitzky runs, and nurses, and grumbles, and consoles.

I said that I wished I had endured all without a word; I appear, from that, to be an unfortunate being who is ill-treated. There was nothing to endure; but I am easily provoked and provoking, and as grandpapa was also, I would become impatient, and I would answer him sharply, and often I was wrong. I do not want to pose as an angel, hiding behind a mask of wickedness.

Tuesday, December 11th.—Grandpapa has lost the power of speech. It is horrible to see this man, who, so short a time ago, was yet strong, energetic, young—to see him like this, almost a corpse!

I continue to draw the bones. I am more than ever with Breslau, Schaeppi, etc.

Wednesday, December 12th.—At 1 o'clock, the priest and deacon came to administer the last sacraments to grandpapa. Mamma wept and prayed aloud. Afterward, I went to breakfast. How strong the animal is in every human being!

Saturday, December 15th.—Naturally, Breslau had an enormous success; she does sketch well. As for me, they found something very good in my head, and some points not bad in my academy figure.

I am—I know not what. Breslau has drawn for the last three years and I for only two months—never mind, it is ignoble! Ah! had I commenced three years ago—only three years, it is not much—I would now be known!

Digitized by Google

A comedy is being enacted at the studio. We had taken up a subscription to present Robert-Fleury and Julian with a photograph of all the pupils in the studio. The Spaniard, forgetting herself in her desire to be a sort of leader, was impertinent to Breslau, who resented it, and the studio became divided.

The Swiss—five in number, one for all and all for one—would not speak to the Spaniard. The descendants of William Tell refused to take part in the subscription and became thoroughly angry. I gathered them in the antechamber, and demonstrated the stupidity of their conduct. In acting thus, they filled the Spaniard with joy, by according her so much importance, and besides, it was an affront to the master.

In short, they reversed their decision. Then, to show the Spaniard that I refused absolutely to recognize her as a superior, I offered to break the deadlock this morning at 9 o'clock, which was before the arrival of the terrible Spaniard. The resolution was supported and acted upon, and I counted 107 francs and 1 sou. I then announced the result in the *salon des plâtres.*

"Is Mademoiselle A— here?" I was asked by a sort of fruit-vender, whose daughter takes drawing lessons.

"No, Madame."

"It is strange, I thought it was she who had—"

"It was all the pupils, Madame, who subscribed, therefore all the pupils have wished to know the result, and it was before them that we broke the deadlock. Good-day, Madame."

The Spaniard arrived and said nothing; but I can boast of having one hatred more against me.

I can also boast that I snap my fingers at it.

Saturday, December 22d.—Robert-Fleury spoke thus to me: "We must never be contented with ourselves." Julian also said the same. Therefore, as I have never been satisfied with myself, I began to reflect on those words; so, when Robert-Fleury had said many good things to me, I answered that he

Digitized by Google

did well to tell me so, as I was very much discontented with myself—discouraged and hopeless. That made him open his eyes in surprise.

And truly, I was discouraged. From the moment I cease to astonish, I am discouraged; it is unfortunate.

In short, I have made unheard-of progress. I have, they repeat to me, "extraordinary talent." My work is "life-like," "harmonious," and "true." "What more do you wish, Mademoiselle? Be reasonable," he ended by saying.

He remained a long time in front of my easel.

"When we can sketch thus," said he, pointing to the head, "we have no right to draw such shoulders."

Some of the Swiss and I, disguised ourselves and went to Bonnats' to be taken in his studio for men. He explained to us that his fifty young men were under no surveillance, and that it was absolutely impossible. We then went to Munkacsy's—I do not know if I write it correctly—a Hungarian artist, who has a magnificent hotel and great talent.

He knew the Swiss girls; they had a letter of recommendation to him a year ago.

Saturday, December 29th.—Monsieur Robert-Fleury was much pleased with me. He remained at least half an hour before a pair of feet, natural size, which I had drawn. Asked me again if I had ever painted, and if I seriously wished to paint; how long I should remain in Paris; expressed a desire to see my first works in colors. He asked how I had come to do them. I answered that I had done them to amuse myself. As the conversation was so prolonged, everybody came and stood behind him to listen, and in the midst (I dare say it) of the general stupefaction, he declared that, if I wished it, I could paint.

To this I answered that I was not dying to do so, and that I would prefer to perfect myself in drawing.

Sunday, December 30th and Monday, December 31st.—I am sad; the holidays were not celebrated at home, and that makes

Digitized by Google

me sad. I went to the Christmas tree at the home of the Swiss girls; it was gay and pleasant, but I was sleepy, having worked until 10 o'clock at night. We told one another's fortunes. Breslau will be crowned, I will get the *Prix de Rome*, and the others got blanks.

It is very funny, all the same.

Digitized by Google

1878.

Friday, January 4th.—How queer it is that my former self sleeps so soundly! Scarcely anything left of it; a memory from time to time awakening old bitterness, but I immediately think of—of what? Of art? It makes me laugh.

Is this the final transformation? I have so long and so persistently searched this end, or this means of existing without cursing myself, or without cursing the rest of creation all day, that it is difficult for me to believe that I have found it.

In my black frock, there is something which recalls Marie Antoinette in the Temple.

I am becoming what I desired to be. Sure of myself, tranquil outwardly, I avoid bickerings and wrangles. I do few useless things.

In short, I am perfecting myself little by little. Let us understand this word perfection—perfection for me, I mean.

Oh, time! that is required for everything!

Time is more terrible, more enervating, more crushing than ever, when there are no other obstacles.

Whatever may happen, I am better prepared than before; when it maddened me to admit that I was not perfectly happy.

Sunday, January 6th.—Well! I am of your opinion, time passes, and it would be a hundred times pleasanter to employ it as I before wished; but, since that is impossible, let us await the result of my talent. There will always be time enough for anything else.

We have changed lodgings; we are at 67 Avenue de L'Alma. From my windows I see the passing carriages of the Champs Elysées. I have a parlor studio of my own.

Digitized by Google

Grandpapa was carried, it was so sad to see it! Scarcely was he in his chamber when Dina and I surrounded him and waited on him, and poor grandpapa kissed our hands.

My bed-room reminds me of Naples. A mirror was broken in grandpapa's room.

Yes, my room reminds me of Naples. The time for traveling approaches, and I feel something like the perfume of the old idleness invading me. In vain!

Monday, January 7th.—To believe, or not to believe, in an artistic future? Two years are not death, and in two years the idle existence may be recommenced, theatres, journeys—I want to become famous!

I will be!

Saturday January 12th.—Walitzky died during the night, at 2 o'clock.

Last night, when I went to see him, he said, half jestingly and half sadly: "*Addio, signorina,*" to remind me of Italy.

It was, perhaps, the first time in my life that I shed tears for any other reason than selfishness or anger.

There is something particularly heart-rending in the death of a thoroughly good, inoffensive being; it is like a poor dog that has never hurt any one.

At 1 o'clock, as he seemed easier, the ladies went to their rooms. My aunt was there alone, when he began to gasp for breath to that extent that water had to be thrown in his face.

When somewhat revived, he arose and declared he would go and say good-bye to grandpapa; but he had scarcely reached the corridor when he crossed himself three times, and cried out in Russian, adieu! but in a voice so strong that mamma and Dina awakened and ran in only to see him fall into the arms of my aunt and Tryphon.

I can not realize it; it seems so impossible; it is so terrible!

Walitzky is dead! It is an irreparable loss. One who did not know him could never imagine that such a character could exist in real life.

Digitized by Google

He was attached like a dog to all our family, with a truly Platonic affection.

We read of such people. Ah! well, may he know my thoughts! I hope that God allows him to feel what I think and say of him. May he hear me, from the place he now is, and if he ever had cause to complain of me, he will forgive me, because of my profound esteem, my sincere friendship, and my heartfelt regrets for him.

Monday, January 28th.—The competition will be judged to-morrow; I am so afraid of being badly placed!

Tuesday, January 29th.—I had such a fear of the competition that it required superhuman efforts from that poor Rosalie, to get me out of bed.

I expected to receive the medal, or to be classed among the very last only.

Neither the one nor the other; I remained in the same place as two months ago; consequently, I have neither advanced nor retrograded.

I went to see Breslau, who is still ill.

Tuesday, February 12th.—They deceived me as to the hour for taking my place, and then the Spaniard and two others asserted that they had said nothing to me, and that I had made the mistake myself. This lie, like all lies, revolted me, the more so as those I had defended in that affair of the Swiss girls, did not say one word to affirm that I was right.

I tell this that it may be known; I have no need of protection; I cry out only when I am in the right.

This morning I could not work at all, I could see nothing; and in the afternoon, Bertha came, and I took a half holiday.

This evening at the Italian opera, they sang "La Traviata"; Albani, Capoul, and Pandolfini. Great artists, but it did not please me; during the last act, I had not a desire to die, but I said to myself that I was going to suffer and die at the very moment when happiness should come to me.

I make that prediction.

Digitized by Google

I was dressed in a baby-waist, which is very graceful when one is slight and well-formed. The white ribbon on my shoulders, the bare neck and arms made me resemble an *infanta* of Velasquez.

To die? That would be absurd, and yet, it seems to me that I am going to die. I can not live; I am not constituted like other people. I have a great deal too much of some things in my nature, and a great deal too little of others, and a character that is inconsistent. Were I a goddess, and had the whole universe at my service, I would find the service bad. Nothing can be more fantastic, more exacting, more impatient than I, sometimes, or perhaps even always. I have a certain depth of reason, of calm; but I do not explain myself well, I merely tell you that my life can not last. My projects, my hopes, my overthrown vanities! I deceived myself in everything.

Wednesday, February 13th.—My drawing does not get on well, and it seems to me that some misfortune or injury will happen to me, as if I had done something wrong, and feared the consequences. I pity myself, but I feel something like fear.

Mamma makes herself entirely unhappy, through her own fault; there is one thing which I request and beseech her not to do, and that is to not touch my things, not to put my room in order. Well, whatever I may say, she continues to do it with an obstinacy which is a positive disease. And if you knew how exasperating it is, and how it increases my impatience and my harsh manner of speaking, which need no augmentation, heaven knows!

I believe she loves me very much. I love her very much also, but we can not remain together two minutes without exasperating each other to tears. In short, we suffer much together; but we would be sad if separated.

I am willing to give up everything for art. I must remember that art only is life.

Digitized by Google

By that, I will obtain an independence, and then, what is to come, may come.

Friday, February 15th.—I will not go to the opera to-morrow. I sketch as usual, which does not prevent me from being discontented with myself. I said so to Robert-Fleury sometime ago, and Saturday, when he was correcting our academy figures, he said:

"You have made this?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"You have never sketched in a class before you came here?"

"Why, no!"

"I believe that you complain?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Of going too slowly?"

"Oh yes, Monsieur!"

"Well, were I in your place, I should be very well satisfied."

This was said with such good-natured gaiety, it was worth many compliments.

Yes! but when can I—paint portraits?—In one year—I hope so, at least.

Sunday, February 24th.—I will go to the studio, and I will prove that one can succeed, when one is determined, desperate, wounded, and furious as I am.

Ah! the road is long! we become impatient, it is natural. Yes, I am impatient, but at twenty I shall not be too old to commence to go into society, and at twenty I shall already know if my hopes of an artistic future were well founded.

Saturday, March 2d.—Robert-Fleury was satisfied with me this morning.

Monday, March 4th.—My dog has been lost since Saturday, and I hoped all along that he would return.

My poor dog; if I had room for any sentiment, I would be desolate.

My poor lost dog!

If I had to die for all I am wanting, for all I have lost!

Digitized by Google

At present, I believe I am an unappreciated being!

It is the most abominable thing we can think of ourselves.

A hundred thousand pretensions, none of which are justified! We knock ourselves on every side and are covered with bruises.

Tuesday, March 12th.—When I think of Pincio, who is now hopelessly lost, it wrings my heart.

I loved him so much, and to lose him grieved me almost as much as the death of Walitzky.

Especially when I think that the animal is in the hands of strangers, that he misses me, and that I will never see again his little physiognomy, and his black eyes and nose, which are so extraordinary. Good, I have made myself cry now.

Oh! *Sapristi!* a thousand oaths of all sorts! I really believe that I would rather see C—, or any one else wounded, sick, or ruined, than to never again see my dog that I loved so much. I feel a true sorrow, and I sneer at all else.

Wednesday, March 13th.—Julian admired jestingly my stoicism, and the Spaniard remarked that persons who worked coldly could do only ordinary things; as for her, she works with so much passion, that she has worked night and day for nearly four years; she can not succeed in putting together a head and an academy figure; she has an eye for color, however.

If I were a man, I would not want to marry her; she produces nothing but deformities.

My uncles, who, personally, can not understand the friendship which exists between C— and myself, suppose that I am tenderly interested in him; it is evident that they do not understand at all, for to fall in love with C— would be like burying one's self alive.

Saturday, March 16th.—I went to the Exposition at the Mirlitons. I truly love my profession, and I am happy to continue telling myself so. "For sometime," said Robert-Fleury to me this morning, "there has been apparently a certain limit which you can not pass; that is not well. With the

Digitized by Google

talent which you really have, you should not stop at easy things; especially since what is most difficult, you already possess."

I know it well; but think of it, a portrait to make at home, amid all the domestic annoyances! But that will trouble me no more—I won't allow it. C— can give me nothing, whilst painting will give me something.

But Monday! How I will pass the limit mentioned by Robert-Fleury! I must first be convinced that I must succeed, and I will succeed.

Saturday, March 23d.—I promised you that I would pass that limit mentioned by Robert-Fleury.

I have kept my word. They were excessively pleased with me. They repeated that it was worth the trouble of working with such real talent as I possessed, that I had made astonishing progress, and that in a month or two—

"You will be one of the best of the pupils, among the strongest, and note," said Robert-Fleury, looking at the absent Breslau's canvas, "note that I speak of those who are not present."

"You may expect," said Julian to me, in a low voice, "you may expect to be detested here, for I have never seen anyone make the progress you have in five months."

"Julian," said Robert-Fleury, before everybody, "I have just paid the highest compliments to Mademoiselle, who is wonderfully gifted."

Julian, notwithstanding his big body, seemed to have wings. For Robert-Fleury is not paid, and corrects only through friendship, so that Julian is happy, when the pupils interest the master.

Julian was present at the correction of the academy figure, (which he has never been before) but, since Monday, I have noticed that he followed mine with curiosity.

In short, with my ordinary modesty, I will dwell no more on flattering things, limiting myself to stating an increase of fifty

Digitized by Google

per cent. of envy in some, and envy and uneasiness in the rest.

The others commence to paint almost whenever they choose; but having placed myself under the special direction of Robert-Fleury, who wishes it so, I do nothing without his order. And to-day, he ordered me to make, from time to time, anything from inanimate nature; something simple to accustom myself to handling colors. That was the second time he spoke of painting to me.

Next week, or the following one, I will make for him, on a No. 8 canvas, the head of my skeleton with a book, or anything else well arranged.

Monday, March 25th.—The competition has begun. A woman who somewhat resembles Croizette is the model.

I have a good enough place, and I believe that I am doing well; I do not wish, however, to tire myself out by staying up late.

Robert-Fleury came this evening. He is decidedly much pleased with me; he questioned me on anatomy, and naturally I answered without hesitation.

It is too odious to be like me; but I thank God for being wise, and not in love with anyone. If I were, I should kill myself with rage.

Saturday, March 30th.—I had not calculated that, from my place, I should have to turn my head to see the model. This turning made me very nervous, and my picture is as bad as possible. I am convinced that I shall be the last, and I said so aloud.

The night courses are over, I shall have to organize some work at home.

Thursday, April 4th.—I went early to the studio. I learned of the decision, which is absolutely senseless, and which has astounded everyone.

Vick had the medal (this is quite natural). Then comes Madeleine (who nearly always gets the medal), and then I. I was so surprised that I was not even pleased.

Digitized by Google

It was so astonishing that Julian went to Lefebvre (the one who was elected first by the Jury of the *Salon*), and asked why he had placed us thus. Lefebvre and all the pupils from down-stairs said, that I had been placed third because they saw that I had the true sentiment of drawing. As to Breslau, it appears that her sketch was tainted with *chic*. She was far from the model, and there was, consequently, a certain softness; but as the professors are prejudiced against women they took that for *chic*.

Fortunately for me, Robert-Fleury was absent. Lefebvre and Boulanger were the only judges, otherwise it would have been said that I was third, through the favoritism of Robert-Fleury.

I do not know what to do with my evenings, since the night course has closed, and it wearies me.

Saturday, April 6th.—Robert-Fleury really encourages me too much. He thought that the second place was due to me, and it did not astonish him at all that I was placed as I was.

It was curious to see the stupid fury of the others. I went to the Luxembourg and then to the Louvre with Schaeppi. To think that M—, on leaving our house, probably goes home and dreams of me, and thinks, probably, that I am dreaming of him!

Whilst I, undressed, in disorder, with disheveled hair, and with my slippers on the floor, was asking myself if I had bewitched him enough; and not contented with asking myself, I asked Dina.

Nevertheless, oh, youth! two years ago I would have thought that this was love. Now, I am reasonable, and I understand that it is merely amusing when you feel that you inspire love, or, rather, when you believe that someone is becoming enamored of you. The love we inspire and the love we feel are two distinct sentiments, and I confounded them in the days gone by.

Good heavens! and I thought I loved A—, with his big nose, which resembles that of M—. Fie! Horror! I am so

Digitized by Google

glad to justify myself! So glad! No, no! I have never loved, and if you could imagine how happy I feel—free, proud, and worthy of the one who is yet to come!

Tuesday, April 9th.—I worked happily in the morning; but in the afternoon, I remained in bed. I was suffering. It lasted two hours, after which I arose, almost glad to have suffered. It is so good afterward, we are so glad to laugh at illness. How beautiful is youth!!

Twenty years from now, my suffering will last a whole day.

I finished "*Le Lys dans la Vallée*"; it is a very tiresome book in spite of its beauties.

Nathalie de Manerville's letter, which terminates the book, is charming and true.

To read Balzac is detrimental to me; for this time, employed in working, would help me to become a Balzac in painting!

Friday, April 12th.—Yesterday, Julian met Robert-Fleury at the café, and Robert-Fleury said that I was truly an interesting and astonishing pupil, and that he expected much from me. It is such words as these that I must constantly bear in mind, especially in those moments when all my intelligence is invaded by that inexplicable and frightful terror, and when I feel myself sinking without real cause into an abyss of doubt and of torments of all sorts.

For some time past, it has happened very frequently that there have been three candles in my room at the same time, which is a sign of death.

Is it I who am to depart for the other world? It seems to me so. And my future and my fame? Oh, well, they will be lost!

If there were a man on the scene, I would believe that I was in love, so uneasy am I; but as there is none, I am disgusted.

Nevertheless, there are days when I think that I do not do wrong to follow my own caprices; on the contrary, I give evidence of pride or of contempt for others, by not going against my own wishes. Oh! but men are all so low and

Digitized by Google

unworthy that I am incapable of troubling myself about them for one single instant. To begin with, they all have corns on their feet, and I would not forgive that in a king! Imagine me dreaming of a man who has corns on his feet!

I commence to believe that I have a serious passion for my profession, which reassures and consoles me. I want nothing else, I am too much disgusted with everything to care for anything but art.

If it were not for this uneasiness and fear, I would be happy.

The weather is beautiful, it is spring at last; we appreciate it as much as it is possible in Paris, where, even in the most charming woods, under trees which seem mysterious and poetic, we are always sure of finding a waiter with his white apron tucked up, and a tray in his hand.

I arise with the sun, and reach the studio before the model. Oh, if I did not have this fear, this accursed superstition!

I remember, in my infancy, I had a presentiment and a fear somewhat like this; it seemed to me that I could never learn anything but French, and that the other languages could not be learned. Ah! well, you see that it was absolutely nothing, and, nevertheless, it was as strong a superstitious fear as the present one is.

I hope that memory will console me.

I believed that the *search for the absolute* was altogether different, because I am also searching for the absolute. But the absolute of sentiments is the absolute in all things. That is what makes me think and write forty thousand questions, the answers to which I finally discover; but only after many mistakes and much trouble.

Saturday, April 13th.—At twenty-two years of age I shall be famous or dead.

Perhaps you believe that we work with the eyes and fingers only? You, who are of commonplace intellect, can never know how much unremitting attention, continual comparisons, calculation, sentiment, reflection, is required to obtain success.

Digitized by Google

Yes, yes, what you say—you say nothing, however; but I swear it to you on the head of Pincio (that seems stupid to you; to me, no) that I shall be celebrated. I swear it to you; I swear it to you seriously; I swear it to you on the Gospel, on the passion of Christ, on myself, that in four years I shall be celebrated.

Sunday, April 14th.—Poor grandpapa, he takes interest in everything; he suffers much in being unable to speak. I guess his meaning better than the others; he was so happy this evening; I read the newspapers to him and we all chatted in his room. It was for me both a sorrow and a joy.

And now my spite, my rage, my despair, find no expression in the human tongue!! If I had sketched from the age of fifteen, I would be already celebrated!!

Do you understand?

Saturday, April 20th.—Last night, when putting away this manuscript, I read a few pages and, at last, came, by chance, upon A—'s letter.

For a long time, this made me dream and smile, then dream again. I went to bed late, but it was not time lost; we do not have these delightful moments when we wish, we have them only when we are young; we must take advantage of them, appreciate them, and enjoy them, as with all that God gives us. The young do not know how to appreciate their youth; but I—I am like an old person who knows what everything is worth, and who does not want to lose any enjoyment.

Because of Robert-Fleury I was unable to go to confession before mass, which forced me to put off communion until to-morrow. The confession was original, here it is:

"You are not without sin," said the priest, after the usual prayer, "are you not subject to laziness?"

"Never."

"To pride?"

"Always."

"You do not fast?"

"Never."

Digitized by Google

"You have offended someone?"

"I do not believe so, but it may be; many little things, my father, nothing serious."

"May God forgive you then, my daughter, etc."

My tranquillity of mind has returned; I have proved it this evening by conversing without any nonsense; I am calm, and I fear absolutely nothing, either morally or physically. Often I have said: I had an atrocious fear of going there, or doing this. It was an exaggeration of language, which is common to almost everybody, and which means nothing. What pleases me is, that I am acquiring the habit of conversing with everyone; this is necessary if we wish to have a pleasant *salon.* Formerly, I would notice one and disregard the others, or nearly so.

Saturday, April 27th (*Sunday, April 28th*).—I foolishly took the idea into my head to invite some men to the midnight mass at our church.

At our right was the Ambassador, the Duke of Leuchtemberg and his wife, Madame Akenfieff. The duke is the son of the Grand Duchess Marie, who died at Florence, and nephew of the Emperor. This couple were at Rome when I was there, and Madame Akenfieff was not received at the embassy. At present, she plays the grand duchess admirably; moreover, she is still a beautiful and majestic woman, although very thin. Ah, well! the husband is always full of little attentions for the wife; it is admirable, and altogether charming.

The embassy gave the Easter supper which took place after mass at 2 o'clock in the morning, in the priest's house, which, being very near the church, was prepared for the occasion. But it was the ambassador who sent the invitations, and who received; we, therefore, had the good fortune of being seated at the same table as the grand duke, his wife, the ambassador, and all that is best of Russia in Paris.

I was sad but not displeased, because it will throw me back into my studies with renewed ardor.

Digitized by Google

Why should not the Prince Orloff, who is a widower, fall in love with me and marry me? I would be ambassadress at Paris, almost empress. Monsieur Anitchkoff, who was ambassador at Teheran, married a little personage for love, although he was over fifty-five years of age.

I did not produce all the effect I could have desired; Laferrière was late, and I had to wear an unbecoming dress; I had to improvise a chemisette, as the dress was *décolleté*, and therefore unsuitable. On the dress, depended my humor; on my humor, my demeanor and the expression of my face—everything.

Monday, April 29th.—From 8 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock at night, from which we must deduct an hour and a half for breakfast, there is nothing so good as regular work.

To speak of something else, I will tell you that I believe that I shall never be seriously in love. I discover always something comical in a man, and then all is lost. If nothing ridiculous, it is awkwardness, or stupidity, or dullness; in short, there is always something wrong, the tip of the ear, perhaps.

It is true that so long as I do not find my master, I will not allow myself to be caught by any charm; my mania for hunting out the defects of people will prevent me from being smitten by any Adonis in the world.

How ridiculous are the people who go to the Bois, and I can not understand their empty and stupid existence!

Friday, May 3d.—There are moments when I would give up all the intellectual pleasures in the world, fame and painting, to go and live in Italy a life of sunshine, music, and love.

Saturday, May 4th.—I adore all that is simple in painting, sentiments, in fact, in everything. I have never had simple sentiments, and I shall never have them, for they are impossible where there are doubts and apprehensions founded on anterior facts. Simple sentiments can exist only in happiness or in the country, in the ignorance of all those things which—

Digitized by Google

I am essentially a meddlesome character; as much by an excess of ingenuity as by self-love; I desire to analyze, to seek the truth. I have a fear of taking a wrong path, of non-success.

Sunday, May 5th.—I have been seven months at the studio.

I went again to the Exposition with Anna Noggren. We ran over everything lightly, except the paintings, which alone interested us.

I was surprised at the portrait of Don Carlos, badly drawn, false in tone, and bearing little resemblance. As to the famous portrait of Monsieur Thiers, I saw it to-day for the first time, not having seen it at the *Salon*, but I am sure it has darkened.

I prefer Carolus Duran for life, and Bonnat for skill.

Bonnat's hands are wonders.

Thursday, May 9th.—I might have a ravishing hand if the fingers were not infamously spoiled by string instruments, and if I had not bitten my nails. But the celestial instruments would not hurt if I had proper nails.

My body like that of an antique goddess; my hips, too Spanish, perhaps; my bust small and perfect in shape; my feet, my hands, and my childlike countenance—of what use are they when no one loves me?

My poor Pincio and that poor Walitzky—I have thought of them to-day.

Saturday, May 11th.—Myself, Schaeppi, and Aunt Marie, went to the Exposition to see the paintings, and admired Don Carlos, who is the most magnificent and most royal-looking man I have ever seen. He surpasses in distinction our grand dukes and our Emperor.

Dress him how we wish, place him wherever we may, everybody would ask: "Who is that man?"

It is not possible to deny race, and when people of rank are ugly, or have no style, believe me, there is something queer in their origin.

It is impossible to appear more kingly, eminent, and easy

Digitized by Google

than Don Carlos. Were that man ordinarily intelligent, he would be irresistible. He is not entirely stupid, but drowsy.

Sunday, May 12th.—I have painted my first picture of inanimate nature—a blue porcelain vase with a bunch of violets and a tattered, red book beside it, on a No. 3 canvas. By that means, I will not cease to draw, and shall accustom myself to colors by devoting to them two or three hours on Sunday. Every Sunday I shall do something or other.

Yesterday, I was abusive to my mother. Then I entered my little parlor, where it was dark, and falling on my knees, I swore before God that I would never again answer my mother crossly, and when she exasperates me, that I will be silent or go away.

She is very ill. Misfortune comes fast, and I would never forgive myself for any unkindness I may have shown her.

Monday, May 13th.—For the afternoon places, lots were drawn, and I won the first choice; but, as I had not yet arrived, the one next to me took the place.

When I arrived, Breslau said to me that I must place myself after all the others, having lost my place. This had never, never, been done, the place was always left for the absent one, and the others placed themselves accordingly; but anyone who was absent was never forced to take the last choice, although this was the rule. I appealed to Monsieur Julian, who answered that the rule existed, but that it had never been enforced, and that he thought it frightful that they should treat me so. I went away furious, but returned, remembering that my absence would be much too pleasing to a lot of jealous imbeciles.

The Spaniard attempted to calm me, as I threatened to leave the studio; the maid came with consolations, and I answered that they need have no uneasiness, that I would certainly work, and that I would be very stupid to lose my time, since they would be so delighted. It still wanted twenty-five minutes to the hour—they had succeeded in making me lose an hour or two—but those twenty-five minutes I employed in

Digitized by Google

calming myself that I might sketch well and enrage those wretches who, through jealousy, had recourse to such paltry tricks. Those twenty-five minutes I employed in treating them like negroes.

Thursday, May 16th.—While I was making preparations to paint my death-head—having, according to my character, previously proclaimed this project—Breslau painted one during the week. That will teach me to gossip less. This caused me to say, when conversing with the others, that truly my ideas must be worth something, since imbeciles were found who picked up the worst and most neglected.

Friday, May 17th.—I would like to become a Communist, if only to blow up all the houses in which families live together!

We should love our home; there is nothing sweeter than to rest in it, to dream in it of things we have done, of persons we have seen—but to rest eternally!

The day from 8 to 6 passes, one way or another, in working; but the evening!

I shall model in the evening—that I may not think that I am young, and that time passes, that I am lonely, that I revolt, that it is terrible!

How queer it is, however, that there are persons who have no luck, either in love or in business. In love, it was my fault; I would excite myself for some and abandon the others; but in business—

I will now go, weep, and pray God, that He may arrange this affair. It is very original to converse with God, but it does not make Him treat me any better.

But others do not know how to ask. I have faith; I beseech.

I am undoubtedly undeserving.

I believe I shall die soon.

Thursday, May 23d.—I have commenced to paint at the studio—two oranges and a knife. Since my rupture with Breslau, I am polite to the Spaniard, who is the most obliging

Digitized by Google

creature in the world. She takes infinite trouble for me—arranges my painting materials, and gives me advice.

I can not work as well in the spring as I do in the winter.

Saturday, May 25th.—"So things are not going on very well with you," said Robert-Fleury to me.

I felt it myself, and if he had not encouraged me by praising my efforts at painting, I would have fallen from the height of my hopes, which would be a serious matter.

We went to the Français to see "*Les Fourchambaults.*" The piece was much admired, but I am not crazy over it.

I wore a hat—but that interests me no longer—what I want is to look *distingué*, I had somewhat forgotten it lately.

Decidedly, I shall be a great artist. Each time I come out of my studies I am driven back by lashings of all sorts.

Have I not dreamed of political drawing-rooms; of the world; of a rich marriage; then again, of politics?

All this in the moments when I dreamed or hoped of the possibility of some arrangement—feminine, human, natural; but no, nothing!

This does not even make me laugh any longer—this constant, imperturbable, astonishing change of good luck to bad.

By it I have gained a great coolness, an enormous contempt for everything; logic, wisdom, a lot of things in short, which compose a character cold, disdainful, insensible, and at the same time, restless, abrupt, energetic. As to the sacred fire, it is hidden and the vulgar spectators, the profane, do not even suspect it. For them I snap my fingers at everything; I have no heart; I criticise, I scorn, I deride.

And all the tender emotions driven back to the depths within me, what do they say of this haughty outside? They say nothing—they murmur and hide, more deeply offended and grieved.

I pass my life in saying savage things which please me, and which astonish others. This would be well if it did not leave a bitter taste, if it were not the fruit of my horrible bad luck in all things.

Digitized by Google

Thus, when I made the famous request of God, the priest gave me wine and bread, which I took; then the piece of bread without wine, as is customary. And that bread fell from my hands twice. I was grieved, but said nothing, hoping that it was not a sign of a refusal.

It seems, however, that it was.

All this proves that there is my art, to which I must consecrate myself—at intervals I shall undoubtedly forsake it, but for a few hours only, after which I shall return to it again chastened and wiser.

Monday, May 27th.—I arrived at the studio before 7 o'clock, and for three *sous* I breakfasted in a creamery with the Swiss girls. I saw the workmen and the street urchins come and take their poor chocolate, the same that I took myself.

"For you to commence by painting inanimate things, Mademoiselle, is like ordering a robust man to take exercise by handling this" (and Julian began to move his pen-case up and down). "Do not yet make the complete figure; but paint hands, pieces of the model; in short, there is nothing better than that."

He is perfectly right, therefore I shall paint a foot.

I breakfasted at the studio; things were brought to me from the house, for I calculated that, in going home for breakfast, I lost one hour every day; which makes six hours, or one day a week—four days a month—forty-eight days a year.

And I want to devote my evenings to modeling in clay. I spoke of it to Julian, who will speak or send word of it to Dubois in such a way as to interest him.

I gave myself four years, and seven months are passed. I believe that three years will suffice; therefore, I have still remaining two years and five months.

I shall then be between twenty and twenty-one years old.

Julian said that in one year I would paint very well, that may be, but not *well enough.*

"This work is not natural," said he, laughing. "You

Digitized by Google

abandon the world, society, everything in fact! There must be an aim, a hidden thought."

He is not a Southerner for nothing.

To-day, a case presented itself similar to that of my rupture with the Swiss, only I took the place of Breslau, and an old lady took mine.

"Madame," said I to her, aloud, "I am in the right and I could keep this place, if it were my habit to quarrel with honest people. Take this place, Madame, by the rules of courtesy it is yours. I am, thank God, well-bred and have nothing in common with certain (forgive the expression) animals, who do not know how to behave themselves."

And as the poor old lady would not accept, I added:

"Take it, Madame, I give it up not only for your sake, but also to glorify myself; I commit this beautiful action because I respect myself."

This is my vengeance, although half humbug.

Thursday, May 30th.—Generally, the relatives of great men do not believe in their genius. At home, they believe too much in my value, that is to say, they would not be astonished if I painted a picture as large as Medusa's raft, or if I received the Legion of Honor. Is it a bad sign? No, I hope not.

Friday, May 31st.—My people went to see a fairy-play at Châtelet and I went with them. When you have seen one, you have seen them all; it wearied me, and while I mechanically looked at the advertisements on the curtain, I was thinking that my life was emaciated, faded, and—lost. It is too bad to feel such a void, such desolation around us. In fact, I understand now, I believed myself born to be happy in everything; at present, I see that I am unhappy in everything; it is exactly the same thing, except that it is all the contrary. From the moment I know what to expect it is quite bearable, and it causes me grief no longer, since I knew it beforehand. I assure you that I say what I think. What is atrocious, is this

Digitized by Google

constant disillusion; to find serpents where you expected to see flowers—that is what is horrible. But these shocks have moulded me to indifference. I notice nothing that passes around me. I do not even put my head out of the coach door as I go to the studio.

I close my eyes or read a newspaper.

You, perhaps, believe that this resignation is the resignation of despair. Well, it is caused by despair, but it is calm and sweet, although sad.

Instead of my life being rose-colored, it is gray—that is all. We accept our lot, and then we are tranquil.

I recognize myself no longer. I have changed completely, and it is a permanent change. It seems queer to me; but it is none the less true. I do not even want fortune—all that I desire are two black frocks a year, clothes that I can wash on Sunday for the week, simple food—provided there are no onions in it, and that it is fresh and—the means of working.

No carriages, the omnibus, or on foot; I wear slippers without heels at the studio.

Why live, then? Why? ah! forsooth! In the hope of better days, and that hope never leaves us.

All is relative—thus, in comparison to my past torments, I enjoy my present happiness as an agreeable event. In the month of January, I shall be nineteen years old. Moussia will be nineteen years old! It is absurd, impossible! It is frightful!

Once in awhile I feel a desire to dress, to walk, to show myself at the opera, at the Bois, at the *Salon*, at the Exposition. But I say to myself immediately: Of what use? And everything falls back to naught.

Between each word that I write, I think a million of things; I express my thoughts only in shreds.

What a misfortune for posterity!

It is not a misfortune for posterity, but it prevents me from making myself understood.

Digitized by Google

I am jealous of Breslau; she does not sketch at all like a woman. Next week I will work so much, that you will see! The afternoons shall be devoted to the Exposition, and the *Salon*; but the next week—I *want* to sketch well, and I will.

Monday, June 3d.—A night without sleep; work from 8 o'clock, and courses from 2 to 7 o'clock at night; then to the *Salon*, then in search of hotels—

And this miserable health is of no use! My energy is wasted to no purpose!

I work—Oh! a fine affair, seven or eight miserable hours a day, which have no more effect on me than seven or eight minutes.

We visited a beautiful studio; I trembled with delight as I looked at it. The sight alone of a large, well-lighted studio makes you believe that you will do beautiful things.

To-morrow, I will tell you seriously my true opinions, my innermost thoughts, which are formed neither by things, nor by men. I will even tell it this evening!

In my heart, my soul, my mind, I am a Republican.

Let titles be maintained, but let there be an equality before the law; all other equality is impossible. Let ancient families be respected, and foreign princes honored. Let the arts, and all that contributes to luxury and art be protected.

These dynasties, these ministers who take root, and who rot in office, infect the country; this protection of court—there is the misfortune, there is the ruin; whilst a chief constantly renewed, ministries often swept away, functionaries changed, when necessary, that is what makes a country white, rosy, and healthy, and, in consequence, capable of everything, if it has intelligence, and that is a thing not wanting in the French.

We reproach the republic with blood, mire, and a thousand other things. Bah! look at all beginnings, especially when half the people prevent or ruin all efforts. Many attempts have failed. Remember Napoleon and Saint Helena.

What is there at present? The sterile Monsieur de Chambord,

Digitized by Google

after him the Orleanists—the Orleanists do not amuse me. I do not like vile things—bastards. As to the race of Napoleon III., that will never come into power again. The republic of to-day is the true, the long expected, the final benediction of heaven come at last.

What matter a few free-thinkers who exist under all administrations, what matter exaggerations! The country is not a *salon.*

Let the people of the different parties choose their own guests; but the republic is not a party, it is the entire country; and the more we come to her the more she will open her arms; and when all have come, there will be no outlaws, no favorite, no more parties. There will be France.

For the moment, the republic has too much to do to busy itself with individuals.

The Republicans are accused of having scoundrels in their ranks, but what nation has none?

If the whole of France became legitimist, or imperialist, would they then all be pure, all without stain? Good night! What I write is almost the ravings of a lunatic, because I write too fast.

Wednesday, June 12th.—To-morrow, I resume my work, so neglected since Saturday. I am remorseful and to-morrow everything will return to its usual order. The evenings will be enough for my own affairs.

Monsieur Rouher astonished me in many ways. First, by his briskness; he, whom I thought grave, slow, decrepid, jumped from the carriage, offered his arm, paid for the cab, ascended the porch running—and then by his ideas: "Semi-instruction," said he, "produces absolute negation of all authority." He proclaimed the benefits of ignorance (although confessing that there were two sides to the question) and pretended that newspapers were poison to the public.

You may well imagine with what curiosity I examined and listened to him—the vice-Emperor!

Digitized by Google

But I need not give you my opinions here, to begin with, because I have not seen him enough, and then because I am not disposed to do it to-night. He related many curious things to us, and which he is in a position to know perfectly, about the attempt of 1867 against our Emperor, and then things about the Imperial family, asking me if we knew the Prince Imperial. You may well believe that I was orthodox with the head of the Bonapartist party.

I am even astonished at my delicate flattery and my tact. Gavini and the baron seemed to approve of me perfectly, and Monsieur Rouher, himself, was pleased, but—what damp fireworks!

They spoke of votes, of law, of pamphlets, of faithful subjects, of traitors, before me. I listened? Oh! by all means. It was an open door into paradise for me.

I said, however, that women should not meddle with anything, as they do only harm, and they are not serious enough to avoid extravagance.

I regret that I am a woman, and Monsieur Rouher regrets that he is a man. "Women," said he, "have not the annoyances and the troubles that we have."

"Will you permit me to say, Monsieur, that each has an equal share of them. But the annoyances of men bring them honors, fame, popularity, whilst those of women bring them nothing."

"You then believe, Mademoiselle, that they always bring all those things?"

"I believe, Monsieur, that that depends on the man."

You must not think that I attacked him like that all at once. I remained fully ten minutes in the corner, quite perplexed, for the old fox did not seem to be enraptured by his introduction to me.

Do you want to know one thing?

I am enraptured.

Now I feel like relating to you all the pretty things that

Digitized by Google

I said—but I must not. I will only tell you that I made great efforts not to say common-place things and to appear full of good sense; the following is a good specimen:

Gavini said that the Bonapartists were happy in having the sympathies of pretty women, bowing to me.

"Monsieur," I answered, addressing myself to Monsieur Rouher, "I do not give my sympathies to your party as a woman, I give them to you as an honest man would."

Saturday, June 15th.—Just think! Robert-Fleury would say nothing to me, so bad was my sketching. Then I showed him that of last week, and I received compliments; it makes no difference.

There are days when everything is fatiguing.

Wednesday, July 3d.—M— came to say good-bye, and as it was raining he proposed to accompany us to the Exposition.

We agreed, but before that, when we were alone, he besought me to be kinder to him, etc.

"You know that I love you foolishly, that I suffer— If you knew how terrible it is to see only mocking smiles, and to hear only railleries, when we love truly."

"You excite yourself."

"Oh, no! I swear to you I am ready to give you all the proofs —devotion the most absolute—fidelity, the patience of a dog, in short! say one word, say that you have a little confidence in me. Why do you treat me like a buffoon, like a being of an inferior race?"

"I treat you as I do everybody else."

"Why? since you know that I do not love you like everybody else, that I am entirely devoted to you."

"I am in the habit of inspiring that sentiment."

"But not as you have in me. Let me believe that your sentiments toward me are not those of hatred."

"Of hatred? Oh, no!"

"What is frightful for me is indifference."

"Ah, indeed!"

Digitized by Google

"Promise me that you will not forget me during the few months that I shall be absent."

"That is not in my power."

"Permit me to remind you, from time to time, that I exist —perhaps I may amuse you, perhaps I may make you smile? Permit me to— to hope that sometimes, rarely, you may send me a word, one only."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, without signature, simply this: 'I am well,' and that is all, and it will make me happy!"

"I sign all that I write, and I honor my signature."

"You grant me permission to write?"

"I am like the *Figaro*, I receive letters from anybody and everybody."

"Heavens! If you knew how terrible it is to never obtain one serious word, to be always scoffed at. No, let us speak seriously. Do not let it be said that you did not have pity upon me at the moment when I leave you! May I hope that my unbounded devotion, my attachment, my love (impose upon me any conditions, any trials that you wish) may I hope that one day you will be more—gentle? that you will not laugh?"

"As to proofs," I said, quite seriously, "there is but one that can be given."

"What is it? I am ready for anything!"

"Time alone can prove your sincerity."

"Be it so, then. You shall see."

"That pleases me much."

"But tell me, you have confidence in me!"

"How? I have confidence in you to the point of confiding a letter to you, with the certainty that you will not open it."

"No! no! but absolute confidence."

"What great words!"

"And if the sentiment is great also?" said he, softly.

"I ask but to believe it, these things flatter our vanity.

Digitized by Google

And see, I am quite willing to have a little confidence in you."

"Really?"

"Really."

That was enough, was it not? We went to the Exposition. I was impatient because M— was happy and made love to me as if I had accepted him.

I feel real satisfaction to-night; the love of M— gives me absolutely the same impression as that of A— did. You see very well that I did not love Pietro! I was not even for a moment in love with him! I was very near loving—but you know how horrible the disenchantment was.

You understand very well that I have no intention of marrying M—.

"True love is always to be respected," I said to him, "you need not be ashamed of it, only do not excite yourself too much."

"Give me your friendship!"

"Vain word."

"Then your—"

"You are exorbitant."

"But what shall I say, since you will not let me come to it little by little, when I commence by friendship?"

"A chimera!"

"Love, then?"

"You are insane."

"Why?"

"Because I execrate you."

Friday, July 5th.—At the Russian Bohemian concert. I did not wish to go and leave a bad impression. We were six: My aunt, Dina, Etienne, Philippini, M—, and myself. The concert over, we went to take some ices, and called two of the prettiest Bohemians, and two Bohemian children, to whom we gave ices and some wine. It was very amusing to talk with these young and virtuous girls; they are closely watched.

Digitized by Google

Afterward, my aunt took the arm of Etienne, Dina of Philippini, and I of the other. We went home on foot, it was such a fine evening. M—, calmed somewhat, spoke to me of his love—it is always the same thing. I do not love him, but his fire warms me; it is what I took for love two years ago!

He spoke well; he even shed tears. As I neared home, I laughed less. I was softened by the beautiful night, and by his song of love. Ah! but it is good to be loved! There is nothing so good in the world as that. Now, I know that M— loves me. It is impossible to be deceived in that. And if he wanted my money, my disdain would have already rebuffed him; and then there is Dina, who is believed to be as rich as I, and many other rich girls he might marry. M— is not a beggar, and he is a perfect gentleman. He would have found—he *will find*—someone besides me.

M— is very well-bred. I may have been wrong in forgetting my hand in his at the moment of our parting. He kissed my hand. I certainly owed him that. And then, he loves and respects me so much, poor man! I questioned him like a child. I wanted to know how it had happened to him, and when? It seems he loved me at first sight. "But it is a strange love," said he; "the others are women; you are above humanity, it is an odd sentiment; I know that you treat me like a hunchback buffoon—that you have no kindness, no heart, and still I love you. And I— I have, so to speak, no sympathy for you, while adoring you."

I still listened; for, to tell you the truth, words of love are worth all the plays in the world, excepting those to which we go to show ourselves. But then, the theatre is a sort of melody of loving manifestations; you are looked at, you are admired, and you bloom like a flower in the sun.

Soden, Sunday, July 7th.—At 7 o'clock, we left Paris. Grandpapa wanted me to remain; but I said good-bye to him; then, he embraced me, and suddenly he began to weep, his nose puck-

Digitized by Google

ered, his mouth open, and his eyes shut, like a child! Before his sickness, this was nothing, but now I adore him. If you knew how much he is interested in the smallest things, how much he loves us all, since he has been in that frightful state. Another instant and I should have remained. What folly to be so sensitive always! Imagine to yourself, a being transported from Paris to Soden. *Silence of death* expresses but feebly the calm that reigns in Soden. It makes me as dizzy as I would be in the midst of great confusion.

Here, then, will be time to meditate and to write.

Doctor Tilenius has just left us. He put the necessary questions concerning my illness and did not say, like the French doctors:

"Good, it will be nothing; in a week we will cure you, Mademoiselle."

To-morrow, I commence the cure.

The trees are beautiful here, the air is pure. The country suits my complexion. In Paris, I am only pretty—if I am even that; here, I appear sweet, poetic; my eyes are larger, and my cheeks thinner.

Soden, Tuesday, July 9th.—The doctors all weary me! I had my throat examined—pharyngitis, laryngitis, and catarrh. Only that!

I amuse myself by reading Livy and taking notes at night. I intend to do this every evening. I must read Roman history.

Tuesday, July 16th.—I want to attain fame by painting or anything else. Do not think, however, that I apply myself to art merely through vanity. There are probably very few persons as artistic as I in everything. You have, no doubt, already perceived it; you, who are the intelligent part of my readers; I sneer at the others. The others will look upon me only as extravagant because, without meaning to be so, I am peculiar in all things.

Doctor Tomachewsky, who is the St. Petersburg opera

Digitized by Google

doctor, ought to know something; however, his advice agrees with Doctor Fauvel and others, and then I know, myself, that the waters of Soden, from their chemical composition, can scarcely have any effect on my disease. If you are not ignoramuses, you must know that only convalescents and consumptives are sent to Soden.

Yesterday, at 6 o'clock in the morning, my aunt and I, accompanied by Doctor Tomachewsky, went to Ems, to consult the doctors there.

The Empress Eugénie is at Ems. Poor woman!

Thursday, August 1st.—I disguised myself as an old German woman, odd-looking and eccentric, and as the appearance of each new face is a curiosity to the frequenters of the Kurhaus, I made a sensation. Only I committed the imprudence of not asking anything from the waiter, which awakened suspicion. I was followed, pursued, and found out.

I assure you it is sad to make twenty-five persons burst with laughter, and not to amuse yourself.

Friday, August 2d.—I have been thinking of Nice, these last few days. I was fifteen years old, and how pretty I was! My form, my feet, my hands, were not perhaps fully formed, but my face was ravishing. Since then, it has never been so. On my return from Rome, Count Laurenti almost created a scene.

"Your face has changed," he said to me, "the features, the color are as they were before; but it is no longer the same thing. You will never again be as you are in that portrait."

He spoke of that portrait, in which my elbows are on the table, and my cheek resting on my hands. * "In that, you seem to have achieved your task, to be resting, your eyes fixed on the future, and to be asking yourself in a half-frightened way: 'Is this life?'"

At fifteen, there was a childlike expression on my face; something that I had, neither before fifteen, nor after. And that expression is the most captivating in the world.

* See Frontispiece.

Digitized by Google

I have discovered some walks in Soden. I do not speak of the vulgar promenades, where each stranger believes himself obliged to walk; but paths and woods where there is no one.

I love this calm. Either Paris, or else the desert. I do not speak of Rome; that would make me weep at once.

Old Livy is such a good historian, and when, in certain passages, we feel that he disguises a defeat, or excuses a humiliation—it is almost touching. Understand me, until now I have never loved but Rome.

Imagine my pleasure when I listen to the ladies here conversing about their nerves, their acquaintances, their doctors, their dresses, and their children! But I isolate myself. I go into the woods. I close my eyes, and I am where I wish to be.

Tuesday, August 6th.—My hat amuses me and amuses Soden. I bought, from the woman who dispenses the water at the spring, a blue woolen stocking she had just commenced; at the same time she showed me how it was made. I seized at once the theory and the stocking. I installed myself with Madame Dutine, opposite the windows of the hotel, knitting the stocking, while my aunt and the rest went—I know not where.

My mien changed; I became calm, very tranquil, sweet. I became Germanized; I knitted a stocking—a stocking that will last forever, for I do not know how to make the heel. I could never make it, and the stocking will be long, long, long.

It will not even be long.

It rains very hard. I am infinitely intelligent! Sweet Germany!

My walks are useful. I read and do not lose my time. Sages, glorify me!

Wednesday, August 7th.—Oh, God! allow me to go to Rome! If you knew, my God, how much I want to go! Oh, God! overpower with kindness your unworthy creature! Oh, God!

Digitized by Google

allow me to go to Rome—It is impossible, no doubt, for it would be happiness!

It is not Livy that excites me, for my old friend has been neglected for several days.

No, nothing but the recollection of the Campagna, of the Plaza del Popolo, of the Pincio, and the dome of St. Peter's in the setting sun.

And that divine, that adorable twilight of morning, when the sun rises, and we begin to distinguish objects little by little. What void everywhere else! And what holy emotion at the recollection of this miraculous, fascinating city! I believe I am not the only one, and that it inspires in everyone inexplicable sentiments, which come from some mysterious influence—some combination of—of the fabulous past with the sanctified present, or else—I do not know how to say it. If I loved a man, I should want to conduct him to Rome, to tell it to him in view of the sun, setting behind the divine dome.

If I were stricken with some immense misfortune, I would go there to weep and pray, my eyes fixed on that dome. If I became the happiest mortal on earth, it is also there I would go.

What crushing vulgarity to think we live in Paris, which is, nevertheless, the only city in the world possible after Rome!

Paris, Saturday, August 17th.—We were still at Soden this morning.

I promised to bow down to the ground five hundred times, if I found grandpapa living. I executed my promise. He is not dead, but still scarcely alive. All the same—there is my Ems cure done for.

I detest Paris! One may be more happy, contented, and satisfied here than anywhere else. That life in Paris may be complete, intelligent, glorious, I am far from denying. But, for the existence that I lead, one must love the city itself. Cities, like persons, are to me sympathetic or antipathetic, and Paris can not please me whatever I may do.

Monday, August 19th.—Mademoiselle E—, who was govern-

Digitized by Google

ess for Madame Anitskoff, is now with us; she will be a sort of governess to me.

I will show a great respect for her in public to impose on others, for she is not imposing; small, reddish, young, sad. A round face, which looks like the moon. That stamp of physiognomy is absurd.

Eyes, with a comical, dreamy look; but a hat after my own ideas. She will do, and I shall go to the studio with her.

I console myself about Ems in seeing how happy grandpapa is to see me again, although he is dying.

I have a terrible disease. *I am disgusted with myself.* It is not the first time that I detest myself, but it is none the less terrible.

To detest another whom you can evade, is one thing; but to detest yourself, that is torture.

Saturday, August 24th.—It took me an hour to make an outline of grandpapa in bed. It is on a No. 3 canvas. They say it is a success. Only you know those white pillows, that white shirt, the white hair, and the half-closed eyes are difficult to depict.

Of course, it was only the head and shoulders. I am glad to have this souvenir.

Day after to-morrow I am going to the studio; to lessen my impatience, I cleaned my boxes, arranged the colors, and sharpened the pencils. During this week I have done all my running about.

Thursday, August 29th.—I do not know by what good chance I was late, and at 9 o'clock I was not yet dressed, when they came to tell me grandpapa was very much worse. I dressed and went in to see him several times. Mamma, my aunt, and Dina, wept. Monsieur G— was walking about the room. I said nothing to him, there was no time to lecture him during these awful moments. At 10 o'clock the priest arrived, and ten minutes later all was over.

Digitized by Google

I remained there until the end, kneeling, now passing my hand on his poor brow, then feeling his pulse. I saw him die—poor dear grandpapa—after so much suffering. I do not like to repeat common-places. During the service which took place at the bedside, mamma fell in my arms, and had to be carried to her room and placed in bed. Everybody wept aloud, even Nicolas; I wept also, but quietly. He had been laid on his bed, badly arranged. Those servants are abominable. They proceed with a zeal which is not always admirable. I fixed the pillows myself, putting on a covering of cambric, edged with lace. I draped a shawl around the bed which he loved—an iron bed—and which would appear poor to others. All around white muslin—that whiteness is appropriate for the integrity of the soul which has flown, and the purity of the heart which beats no longer. I touched his brow when it was quite cold, and I felt no fear nor disgust.

We expected the blow, but we were, nevertheless, overcome.

I directed all the dispatches and letters announcing his death. But care had also to be given to mamma, who had a violent nervous attack. I think I behaved exceedingly well, and although I did not weep aloud, my heart is not worse than the others.

I can not distinguish my dreams from my real sentiments.

We had to go in search of mourning, etc. My family would think it dreadful not to wear exterior mourning; not understanding the mourning of the soul, and thinking that the more crape you wear the better mother, daughter, inconsolable widow, you are.

The atmosphere is laden with a frightful mixture of flowers, earth, and incense. It is warm and they have closed the blinds.

At 2 o'clock I began to paint the portrait of the poor dead, but the sun came into the room at 4 o'clock and it had to be interrupted; it will be but an outline.

I do not know how I should act; but I try instinctively to observe the rules of etiquette, while keeping up a good heart.

Digitized by Google

At every instant I open this book to register some event.

Friday, August 30th.—Real life is a detestable and wearisome dream—yet how happy I could be with only a little happiness. I possess in a supreme degree the art of making much out of nothing, and then nothing which affects others affects me.

Sunday, September 1st.—And I see nothing—nothing but painting. Should I become a great artist, it would be a divine compensation. I would have the right to have sentiments, opinions, and I would not scorn myself for writing all those miseries! I would be something—I—I could be happy in being nothing, if I were loved by a man who would be my glory. But now, I must be something through my own efforts.

Wednesday, September 4th.—Kant pretends that things exist only through our own imagination. That is going too far; but I admit his system in the domain of sentiment. In fact, our sentiments are produced by the impression made upon us by persons or things; and since Kant says that objects are not such, or such, that in a word they have no objective value, and no reality, except in our mind, why— But to follow out this line of thought, I ought not to be in a hurry to go to bed, nor to have to think of the hour I must commence drawing to finish for Saturday.

Ordinarily, imagination is considered to be something different from what I think it; people use the word imagination to express folly and stupidity; but can love exist otherwise than in the imagination? It is thus with all other sentiments. This philosophical scaffolding is certainly admirable, but a simple woman like me can demonstrate its falsity.

Things have a reality only in our mind! Well, and I—I say to you that the object strikes the sight, and sound the hearing, and that these (let us say *things*) determine everything—otherwise nothing would need to exist, we would *invent* everything. If, in this world nothing exists, where then, does anything exist? For, to affirm that nothing exists, we must have

Digitized by Google

knowledge of the real existence of something or other, no matter where, were it only to demonstrate the difference between objective and imaginary values. Indeed—inhabitants of another planet, perhaps, see otherwise than we do, and in that case we are right; but we are on the earth, let us remain on it, and study what is above or under, and that is quite enough.

I become enthusiastic for these learned, patient, extraordinary, tremendous follies—these reasonings, these deductions, so concise, so learned. There is but one thing which grieves me, and that is, I feel them to be false, and I have not the time nor the inclination to find out why.

I should like to converse about it with someone. I am all alone; but I assure you that what I advance is not intended to impose on people. I candidly give my ideas and I would willingly accept all the good arguments that anyone else could make.

I long, without making myself ridiculous by too much pretension—I long to listen to the discourse of learned men. I want so much, so much, to penetrate into the learned world; to see, to hear, to learn—but I know not to whom, nor how to ask it, and I remain here stupid, amazed, not knowing what direction to take, and catching glimpses on all sides of treasures of interest—histories, languages, science, all the world, in fact. I want to see all together and to know all, to learn all!

Friday, September 13th.—I am misplaced. I spend in futilities what would have made a man famous. I make learned discourses in answer to domestic quarrels and absolute trifles. I am nothing, and what might have been good qualities are, for the greater part of the time, useless or displaced.

There are great statues which are admirable on a pedestal, in the center of a large space; but place them in your room, and you will see how stupid and cumbersome they are! You will knock your head and elbows ten times a day, and will

Digitized by Google

end by cursing, and find insupportable what would be the admiration of all, if well-placed.

If you find that "statue" is too flattering for me, I should like it as well if it were—anything you wish.

Saturday, September 21st.—I have received compliments and encouragement. Breslau, who has returned from the sea, has brought back studies of peasant women, heads of fishermen.

They were exquisite in coloring, and poor A—, who had consoled herself by saying that Breslau knew nothing of color, made a wry face. Breslau will be a great artist, a truly great artist, and if you knew how severely I judge and how I scorn the pretensions of females, and their adoration for R—, because it seems he is handsome, you would understand that I do not go into raptures for nothing. Moreover, when you read this, the prediction will be accomplished. I must make an effort to sketch from memory, otherwise I shall never know how to compose. Breslau always makes outlines, rough sketches, and a lot of things. She made them for two years before coming to the studio, where she now is. She entered about the month of June, 1876, at the time when I was wasting myself in Russia—misery!

Monday, September 23d.—Julian came to tell me that Monsieur Robert-Fleury is much pleased with me, and, in short, he thinks that I do astonishing things for the short time I have been at work, and he has great hopes that I will do him honor.

It is stupid to write every day when you have nothing to say. I have bought, in the Russian section, a wolf for a rug, which frightens Pincio II. horribly.

Shall I really become an artist? The fact is that, outside of the studio, I do nothing but study Roman history in engravings, notes, geographical maps, texts, translations.

All that is so stupid, nobody cares for it, and my conversation would be more brilliant if I read things of recent date. Who cares for the first institutions, the number of citizens

Digitized by Google

under Tullus Hostilius, the sacred rites of Numa, the struggles of the tribunes, and the consuls?

The great history of Duruy, which appears in numbers, is a treasure.

When I have finished Livy, I shall read the "History of France," by Michelet, and then the Greek authors whom I know only by hearsay and through quotations from other books, and then—my books are in boxes and we must be in more permanent lodgings before I unpack them.

I have read Aristophanes, Plutarch, Herodotus, Xenophon a little, and I believe that is all. Also Epictetus; but not carefully, and I am well acquainted with Homer and slightly with Plato.

Friday, September 27th.—Everywhere and often the wrongs of men and of women are discussed, and we do the best we can to prove that it is the one or the other side which is the most culpable. Must I, then, interfere to enlighten the poor citizens of the earth?

Man, having in a certain sense the initiative in almost everything, should be regarded as the most culpable, without being, on that account, more wicked than the woman, who, being in a certain sense a passive being, escapes a certain responsibility, without being on that account better than the man.

Saturday, September 28th.—Robert-Fleury was again pleased with me, and asked me if I had done any painting.

"No, Monsieur."

"Ah, Mademoiselle, that is not well. You know it was agreed upon that you should. You are really guilty, if you do not work constantly."

And if you knew how sparing he is in his praises, a *not bad* is quite a strong approval, and I have had: Good, well, very well.

Monday, September 30th.—I have done my first official painting.

Digitized by Google

It was to be a picture of still life; so I painted, as you know, a blue vase and two oranges—and then the foot of a man, and that is all.

I have given up sketching plaster casts, and I hope I shall soon paint from life.

I wrote to Colignon that I wished I were a man. I know that I should become somebody; but with skirts—what can one do? Marriage is the only career for women; man has thirty-six chances, woman has but one, the zero like the Bank. But the Bank gains in any case; we pretend that it is the same with woman; but that is not true. How, then, can you expect that we will not be exceedingly cautious in choosing a *husband*? Never have I rebelled so much against the condition of woman. I am not foolish enough to claim that stupid equality, which is an Utopia (and then, besides, it is bad form) because there can not be equality between two beings so different, as man and woman. I ask nothing, because woman has already all that she should have; but I grumble at being a woman, because I happen to be one only as far as outward appearance goes.

Thursday, October 3d.—To-day, we spent nearly four hours at a dramatic, musical, international matinée. Fragments from Aristophanes were given in frightful costumes, and, besides, so much abridged, arranged, and altered, that the effect was hideous.

There was one thing which was superb—a dramatic recital, "Christopher Columbus," by Rossi, in Italian. What a voice! what intonation! what expression! what ease! It was better than music. I believe it would have been admirable even if we had not understood Italian.

While I listened, I almost adored him.

Ah, how powerful are spoken words, even when they are not our own, but another's committed to memory! The handsome Mounet-Sully recited afterward—but I will not speak of him. Rossi is a great artist—he has the soul of an artist. I saw him at the door of the theatre speaking with two other men, and

Digitized by Google

he has a common look. He is an actor, it is true; but such a great actor should exhibit a certain grandeur of character, even in everyday life. I looked at his eyes; they are not those of an ordinary man, but the charm exists only while he speaks. Oh, then it is wonderful! And Nihilists sneer at art!

What a frightful existence! If I were intelligent, I should know how to extricate myself and change it all; but my intelligence must be taken for granted, and, furthermore, you have only my own word for it.

When have I proved it? In what way have I shown my intelligence?

Saturday, October 5th.—This is the day that Robert-Fleury corrects at the studio. Well, I had a terrible fright. He said: Oh! Oh! Ah! Ah! Oh! Oh! in several different tones, and then—

"You are painting?"

"Not altogether, Monsieur. I paint only once a month."

"You are right to make a beginning. You can paint; and there is some good, there is some good."

"I feared I was not far enough advanced to paint."

"Not at all. You are far enough advanced; continue, it is not bad, etc."

And, after that, a *long lesson*, which proves that I am not *without hope*, as we say at the studio. I am not liked at the studio, and at each unfortunate success, B— looks at me so furiously that it is laughable.

But Robert-Fleury does not believe that I never took painting lessons.

He remained a long time, correcting, conversing, and smoking, as if he were Carolus.

I received considerable *extra* advice, and then he asked how I was placed in the last competition of last year. And when I said second—

"And this year," he said, "it must—"

Hum?

Digitized by Google

It is so stupid, he has already told Julian that he thought I would have a medal.

At last, without any drawbacks, I am authorized to paint from nature, without having painted from inanimate nature. I skip it as I have skipped the casts.

Monday, October 7th.—Idiots will say that I want to be considered a second Balzac; no, but do you know why he is so great? Because he pours on paper all that he conceives in his mind, quite naturally, without fear, without affectation. Nearly all intelligent persons have thought what he has thought, but who has been able to express it like him?

No, it is not true that nearly all intelligent persons have had the same thoughts; but, in reading Balzac, one is so forcibly struck by his truth, his naturalness, that one thinks one has. It has happened to me a hundred times, when conversing or reflecting, to be horribly tormented by ideas which I did not have the power to disentangle from the frightful chaos of my mind.

I have also another pretension; it is this: When I say something good, or make a very witty observation, it seems to me that I am not understood.

Perhaps, really, I am not understood as I wish to be understood.

Good-night, good people!

Robert-Fleury and Julian are building enormous hopes on my future; they care for me as they would for a horse which had a chance to win the *grand prix*. Julian, by gestures, says *all this* will spoil me; but I assured him that *all this* encourages me enormously; which is the truth.

Wednesday, October 9th.—The success obtained at the Beaux-Arts competition, by Julian's pupils, placed his studio on a good footing.

There are more pupils than are needed. Each one expects to obtain the *prix de Rome*; or, at least, to compete at the school.

Digitized by Google

The women's studio participates in the splendor, and Robert-Fleury is a rival of Lefebvre and Boulanger. To everything, Julian says: "What will they say down-stairs?" or, "I would like to show this to the gentlemen down-stairs."

I have sighed very much for the honor of seeing one of my drawings taken down. We take drawings down to them only to boast or to enrage them, because they say that women can not do serious work. I have thought for some time of having the honor of being taken down.

Well, to-day, Julian came in, and having examined my academy figure, spoke thus:

"Finish this well, and I will take it down-stairs."

Saturday, October 12th.—My academy figure was found to be very well, very well, very well.

"Ah! you have much talent, and if you work, you can do what you please."

I am surfeited with praise (I say surfeited for form's sake) and the proof that R— does not lie, is that they envy me on all sides, and it is stupid; but it grieves me. There must be something, when they tell me such things every time; especially, when he who says it is a man as serious and as conscientious as R—.

As to Julian, he adds that if I knew all they say of me, it would turn my head.

"It would make you tipsy, Mademoiselle Marie," said the maid.

I always fear that my readers will think that people flatter me because I am rich. That has nothing to do with it. I do not pay more than others, and the others have protectors, friends, and relations among the professors. Moreover, by the time you read this, there will no longer be any doubt of my merits. Ah! I must indeed find compensation in that way.

It is good to see the respect accorded you for your personal merits.

Digitized by Google

R— commences to act like Carolus again; he comes, he goes (he received a grand medal at the Universal Exposition). After correcting he converses, he lights a cigarette, he throws himself into an arm-chair. It is all the same to me. I know that he adores me as a pupil—Julian also.

The other day the Swiss girl gave me advice, and then Julian called me into his study and told me to follow my own ideas; that the painting might be weak at first, but that it would be *me*; "while, if you listen to others, I answer for nothing."

He wants me to try sculpture and he will ask Dubois to give me advice.

For the first time in Paris, I went out with pleasure. I was well dressed, well bonneted, neat. I took my time and did not hurry myself. Dina remained with mamma and I had the place of honor.

Turning my back to the horses is a torture for me, rather than a pleasant drive. Every Saturday I will do like this. It is so stupid to go to the Bois, no matter how. To-day I enjoyed myself; I had success—everybody looked at me.

A mourning dress, a felt hat with feathers, everything perfect.

Monday, October 14th.—"It is crowded down-stairs," said Julian, "I will take down your academy figure, give it to me."

I know these are little things, but they are all the same very agreeable.

Wednesday, October 16th.—It is stupid; but the envy of those women grieves me; it is so little, so vile, so base! I never knew how to envy. I regret that I am not what others are.

I bow before superiority. It vexes me; but I bow down whilst these creatures do just the opposite with their prearranged conversations, their mysterious smiles when speaking of someone with whom the professor is satisfied, and their words addressed to me in speaking of another, by which they demonstrate that studio successes mean nothing.

Digitized by Google

They have at last arrived at the conclusion that competitions are stupid—more especially as Lefebvre has bad taste and likes only sketches stupidly copied from nature, and as Robert-Fleury is not a colorist.

Briefly, the masters are incapable, notwithstanding their celebrity, and it was the Spaniard, Breslau, and Noggren who judged them so. I am of their opinion when they say that studio glories are nothing, for here are at least two or three who will remain deplorable mediocrities, while passing for artists of the first order among the other students.

The pupils do not like me at all, but the masters are satisfied with me.

It is so amusing to hear these women say the contrary of what they said ten months ago, when they were sure of obtaining the medal first. It is amusing because it is one of those old, old comedies played all over the world, but it tells on my nerves. Is it, perhaps, after all, because I have an honest nature?

These studio miseries weary and annoy me in spite of my own good sense. The truth is, I am very impatient to surpass the rest.

Sunday, October 20th.—I ordered the carriage at 9 o'clock and, accompanied by my maid of honor, Mademoiselle Elsnitz, I went to visit St. Philippe's, the church of Saint Thomas, Aquinas, and Notre Dame. I went up to the top and examined the bells as an English woman might have done. Well, there is an adorable Paris, old Paris, and I can be happy in it; but on the condition that I avoid the boulevards and the Champs Elysées, all the new, the beautiful quarters; in fact, what I execrate, what irritates my nerves. But over there in the Faubourg Saint Germain, I feel quite different.

Afterward we went to the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*. It is enough to make one cry with rage.

Why can not I go and study there? Where can I get instructions as complete as there? I went to see the Exposition

Digitized by Google

of the *Prix de Rome*. The second prize was won by a pupil of Julian's studio. Julian is very fortunate. If ever I am rich, I will found an art school for women.

Saturday, October 26th.—My painting is much better and my academy figure very good. Monsieur T— judged the competition: First, Breslau; second, I. In short, I ought to be satisfied.

This morning, as Robert-Fleury was speaking to me, in private, of cartoons for my sculpture, I listened like a baby, with the air of a silly little girl, my cheeks changing color, and my hands embarrassed. He could not help smiling while talking, and I also, for I thought that I smelled fresh violets, that my naturally waving hair, dry and light, was deliciously lighted up and that my hands, holding I know not what, took pleasing poses.

Breslau says that the way in which my hands touch objects is beautiful, although my hands in themselves are not classically beautiful.

But one must be an artist to appreciate such a thing as that, the vulgar, or people of the world, pay no attention to the way we grasp objects, and would prefer plump or even fat hands to mine.

Between 10 and 11 o'clock, I had time to read five newspapers and two numbers of Duruy.

I fear that those successes at the studio will impede me. I am almost ashamed that everything goes well, and because they say to me: Much better or very well. I feel neither the difficulties nor the progress; and yet, when they say it to Breslau, it seems to me that she is a great artist. That should reassure me somewhat.

Sunday, November 3d.—Mamma, Dina, Madame X—, and I went out together. They wish to marry me, but I told them plainly, in order not to be the means of enriching some gentleman, that I will marry with pleasure, but on condition that the gentleman be rich, occupying a fine position and

Digitized by Google

handsome, or else a man who is intelligent, remarkable, etc. As to his character, he may be Satan, himself; I will manage him.

Madame G— speaks of art in such a trifling manner that I will leave the room if she speaks of it again before me. She mentions ladies who paint at home, who have professors, and says that I can do as much when I am married, and all in that indifferent tone of the woman of the world, of the *bourgeoise*, in which there is something so frightfully low and so insulting to all the artistic and elevated sentiments.

You understand I view matters in a sensible and perfectly just manner.

I shall first try to make the marriage of my dreams. If I do not succeed, I will marry, like all the world, with the aid of my dowry. Now, I am tranquil.

In marrying we must remember that it is not an apartment that we rent by the month, but a house that we buy. We must find in it all our comforts, and we can not overlook the want of a few rooms, as in rented lodgings; and an old Russian proverb says, that "annexes bring misfortune."

Tuesday, November 5th.—There is one old-fashioned idea which is truly beautiful: Annihilation of the woman, before the superiority of the man she loves, must be the greatest enjoyment of self-love that a superior woman can experience.

Saturday, November 9th.—A shameful thing, no medal at all! This will be a triumph for those imbeciles of women who are far advanced, and who did not compete. Nevertheless, I am first. I believe I should have been so even if Breslau had exhibited. There would then have been two firsts, but this private conviction of mine counts for nothing. The fact is there. She did not compete. There is no medal. At heart I do not care. Breslau is the only one that I respect; but then she has had three years of study at Julian's and two at Zurich. Total, almost five years, I discount her illnesses. And I, I have had in all, only eleven months; and if you take into

Digitized by Google

consideration my previous attempts, it will add one month. If you count the copies of engravings and the six heads painted in Rome at different times, all these scrawls make a month's study (eight hours a day, I declare it on my honor), six weeks at the maximum, therefore we have one year. All this is to announce to you, with great pomp, that I sketch academy figures as well as Breslau; the masters have told me so.

Wednesday, November 13th.—Robert-Fleury came this evening. It would be nonsense to repeat the encouragement he gave me after a long lesson. If what these persons say is true, you will know (at the time you read this) what to think of me.

Only it pleases me all the same to find that people take me altogether in earnest. I am silly—I have the greatest hopes of myself, and when they tell me I am right to have them, I appear as if I did not know it myself, and I feel transported with joy! I am astonished and radiant like a monster who knows himself to be loved by the most beautiful of women.

Robert-Fleury is an excellent professor, he leads you on step by step, so that you feel the progress that you make at each step. This evening he treated me somewhat like a pupil who has learned her scales, and to whom we give a piece to play for the first time. He raised the corner of the curtain and showed me a more spacious horizon. This night will count in my studies.

Saturday, November 16th. — To-day, Robert-Fleury was much pleased with Breslau, and persuaded her to paint something for the *Salon*, adding that she would be received; that he would answer for it. This week I had next to me old G—, the plague of the studio, a good woman, but foolish and enervating.

I have equaled Breslau in drawing; what she has, more than I, is practice. Now, I must give myself so many months to paint like her, for, if I can not do that, I have no talent whatever. But, during the eight or ten months that I allow myself,

Digitized by Google

she will not stand still; I shall, therefore, be forced to progress very fast to catch up with her in the eight or ten months during which we shall remain together. It seems to me very improbable that I shall succeed. But, by the grace of God, we shall see.

Wednesday, November 20th.—This evening, after my bath, I became suddenly so pretty that I spent twenty minutes looking at myself. I am sure if I were seen to-day, I would have great success. My complexion was absolutely dazzling, and so delicate, so soft, the cheeks scarcely rosy; the only strong points of color were the lips, the eye-brows, and the eyes.

I beseech you do not think me blind when I am looking ugly, I see it well I assure you; and this is the first time I have looked pretty for a very long time. Painting absorbs everything. What is infamous in life, is that all this must fade, wither, and die.

Thursday, November 21st.—Breslau has painted a cheek so natural and so true, that I, woman, and rival artist as I am, feel a desire to kiss that woman's cheek.

It must be often thus with things of this life; we should not approach them too near, we would soil our lips, and spoil the object.

Robert-Fleury came to the studio this evening; everything still goes on very well.

Friday, November 22d.—The future that awaits Breslau frightens me; it makes me gloomy, sad.

In her pictures there is nothing feminine, common-place, or disproportioned. She will be remarked at the *Salon*, for, besides the expression that she will put into her picture, she will not choose an ordinary subject.

I am really foolish to envy her. I am a child in art, and she a woman.

My painting before all; for the moment I am under a cloud —all seems dark to me.

Saturday, November 23d.—Robert-Fleury has again spoken

Digitized by Google

to me "from the point of view of a serious artistic future, the future of a talented artist!" I do not quite remember the expressions he used, but he spoke of my work in general, and Breslau, who was listening, looked at me with that air of consideration and benevolence, which we put on when we wish to hide our jealousy.

It was not in regard to my head of this week—my painting is still so weak, that there is not much to say for it—but it was the whole of my studies. What troubles me a little, is that he told me not to content myself with the studies at the studio, but to make rough sketches, pictures from memory, etc.

I was started like a machine, and now I must add my own efforts, and have a little independence. From the way in which he advised and encouraged me to work, I saw I was in his good graces, as well as Breslau. You understand that I care little for the man, but much for the master, for I repeat it to you, without being a wonderful artist, he is a perfect teacher.

With Breslau and me, he has a peculiar manner of correcting.

This evening I went again to see "*Les Amants de Vérone*" with Nadine and Paul. We invited Philippini. Capoul and Heilbroun sang and acted in an adorable manner. The work opens like a flower at the second hearing. I must go again. The flower will probably expand more still, and shed a perfume altogether charming. There are delicious things in the opera, but then it requires patience and delicacy to appreciate them; the music is not startling, one must search for the charm, which is subtle, almost intangible, but which exists nevertheless.

Sunday, November 24th.—We visited the museum of antiquities, with Nadine. What simplicity and what beauty!

Ah! Greece will never be repeated!

Monday, December 16th.— It is freezing and snowing. I have peace only when I work, and the hours that remain, I employ in reading or sleeping.

Digitized by Google

Never, never have I been so undecided, stupefied, discouraged, and skeptical. There is nothing in the world I care for.

I work exactly like a machine. I need constant study and numerous compliments. That will bring me back to my dreams of artistic fame, and give me a reason to live.

Saturday, December 21st.—To-day, nothing good. I can not paint. I think it will take more than six months to equal Breslau. She will surely be an extraordinary woman, a mixture, I would say an odd mixture, if oddness were not so common in these days.

I can not paint.

Now, my child, you believe that Breslau painted better than you at the end of two months and a half, but she was painting still life or casts. Six months ago, Robert-Fleury was saying to her the words he said to me this morning.

"It is not bad, but the tone is crude and cold. We must get out of that, make one or two copies."

She is not dead at the end of ten months of painting, shall I die at the end of two months and a half of it?

Friday, December 27th.—This week has been lost to me for the studio. For the last three days I have wanted to write down certain reflections, I don't know just what. But distracted by the singing of the young lady in the second story, I began to read over my life in Italy, and then I was disturbed, and I lost the thread of my ideas, and that feeling of melancholy which it is so pleasant to indulge in.

What surprises me is to see what grandiloquent words I employed to describe simple adventures.

But my mind was full of lofty sentiments, and I was vexed at not having anything astonishing to relate—any tremendous, romantic sensations, and I *interpreted* my sentiments; artists will understand me. All that is very well; but how was it possible that a girl, who pretended to be intelligent, did not better understand the value of men and events? I say this because the thought has come to me that my relatives ought

Digitized by Google

to have enlightened me on such subjects, and told me, for instance, that A— was not an earnest man, nor a man for whom I should have suffered one moment of pain. It is true they spoke to me, but in a wrong way, my mother having even less experience of the world than I; but, after all, that is of minor importance, and since I had such a high opinion of my own intelligence, I should have known better, and treated him like the others, instead of bestowing so much attention upon him, both in this journal and elsewhere.

But I burned with impatience to record something romantic, and fool that I am! There might have been more romance if I had been more patient. In short, I was young and inexperienced, notwithstanding my foolish boasting. I must acknowledge that, whatever it costs me to do so.

There! It seems to me that I hear someone say: A strong-minded woman, like you, should never be obliged to retract her words.

Sunday, December 29th.—Last night I laid my head down on the sofa and slept soundly until 8 o'clock this morning. It is amusing to sleep like that outside of your bed.

Art has lost its hold on me and I can not interest myself in anything else. My books are packed up, I am forgetting my Latin and my classics, and I seem quite stupid to myself. The sight of a temple, of a column, of an Italian landscape makes me feel a horror of Paris, so dry, so learned, so experienced, so refined. The men here are ugly. This city, which is a paradise for superior natures, is nothing to me. Oh! I have deceived myself; I am neither wise nor happy. I want to go to Italy, to travel, to see mountains, lakes, trees, seas—with my family, with bundles, recriminations, tribulations, daily little quarrels? Ah, no, a hundred times no! To really enjoy the delights of travel, I must wait—and time passes. Well, so much the worse! I can always marry an Italian prince whenever I wish; then let me possess my soul in patience.

But, you see, if I took an Italian prince, I could work, since

Digitized by Google

the money would be mine; but I should have to give him some. In the meantime I will remain here, and work at painting.

Saturday, they found my sketch, done in two days, not bad. You understand that it is only with an Italian that I could live as I wished, and where I wished in France, or in Italy; what a beautiful life it would be! I should divide my time between Paris and Italy.

Digitized by Google

1879.

Thursday, January 2d.—What I long for, is the liberty to ramble alone, to come and go, to seat myself on the benches in the garden of the Tuileries, and especially of the Luxembourg, to stop at the artistic shop-windows, enter the churches, the museums, to ramble at night in the old streets, that is what I long for, and that is the liberty without which one can not become a true artist. Do you believe that we profit by what we see when we are accompanied, or when going to the Louvre, we must await our carriage, our *chaperon*, or our family?

Ah! heavens and earth! that is what makes me so angry to be a woman! I will dress myself like a woman of the middle class, wear a wig, and make myself so ugly that I will be as free as a man. There is the liberty that I want and without which I shall never succeed in being anything.

One's thoughts are fettered by this stupid and enervating constraint; even if I disguise myself and make myself homely, I am but half free, for a woman who roams about is imprudent. And in Italy, in Rome?

The idea of going in a landau to visit ruins!

"Where are you going, Marie?"

"To see the Coliseum."

"But you have already seen it! Let us go to the theatre or take a drive, where there will be a crowd."

And that is enough to bind one down to the earth.

That is one of the great reasons why there are no women artists. Oh, sordid ignorance? Oh, savage routine! It is horrible to think of it all!

Digitized by Google

Even if we said sensible things, we would be assailed by the vulgar and ancient ridicule with which the apostles of woman's emancipation are overwhelmed. However, I think there is certain cause for laughter!

Women will never be anything but women. But, however, if they were brought up in the same manner as men, the inequality which I deplore would not exist, and there would remain only what is inherent in human nature itself. Ah, well! whatever I may say, women will shout and make themselves ridiculous (*I* will leave that to others) in an effort to obtain equality some time during the next century.

I will try to aid the cause by showing myself to society as a woman who has become something, notwithstanding all the disadvantages with which she is overwhelmed by society.

Friday, January 10th.—Robert-Fleury came to the studio this evening.

We dined and breakfasted at the English café, where the food is good; as restaurants go, it is the best.

The Bonapartist journals, and the *Pays* in particular, were so dismayed over the elections, that I experienced something like a sentiment of shame for them, as I did yesterday for Massenet when they encored his incantation, which, when repeated, was not nearly so fine.

If painting does not give me fame soon, I shall kill myself, and so end it all. I resolved upon that several months ago. Even when in Russia, I wanted to kill myself, but I feared what comes after this life. I shall kill myself at the age of thirty; for, until we are thirty years old, we are still young, and we can hope for luck, or happiness, or fame, or—no matter what. It is all settled, therefore, and if I am sensible, I will torment myself no longer—either now, or in the future.

I am speaking very seriously and I am really glad to definitely settle everything.

Saturday, January 11th.—At the studio it is thought that I go into society a great deal; that, in conjunction with our difference

Digitized by Google

in station, separates me from the others, and does not permit me to ask anything of them, as they do of one another, or to go to an artist's house or visit a studio.

I worked honestly all the week until 10 o'clock at night on Saturday, then I returned home and wept. Until now I have always carried my sorrows to God, but as He has not heard me, I believe in Him—very little.

Those alone who have experienced this feeling can understand it in all its horror. It is not that I wish to virtuously preach religion, but God is something very convenient at times. When there is no one to appeal to, when we are at the end of our resources, God remains. To pray to God pledges you to nothing, troubles no one, and is a supreme consolation.

Whether He exists or not, *we must believe in Him absolutely*, unless our life is a very happy one. In the latter case, we can do without Him. But in all sorrows, in misfortune, in all disagreeable things, it were better to die than not to believe.

God is an invention which saves us from absolute despair. Imagine, then, what it is when we invoke Him, as our last, our only resource, and even as we do so, realize that we do not believe in Him!

Monday, January (*Russian New Year*).—Well, I am amusing myself with folly as usual. The entire Sunday was spent at the theatre. A matinée at the Gaîté to see a somewhat sad play, and the Opera Comique in the evening—the *Pré aux Clercs*. I passed the night in bathing, writing, reading, lying on the floor, and taking tea.

It is a quarter after 5; I will go to the studio early, and at night I will sleep, and to-morrow I will arise early, and then things will go on of themselves. Do not think that I love these pretty tricks; I have a profound disgust, and a profound horror of myself. No matter, I met the new year in an original manner—on the floor with my dogs. I worked all day.

Tuesday, January.—I could not awaken until half-past

Digitized by Google

11 o'clock, after that vigil. The competition was judged this morning by the three masters in full conclave: Lefebvre, Robert-Fleury, and Boulanger. I reached the studio at 1 o'clock, to learn the result. This time the big ones had competed, and the first words they said to me as I came in were:

"Well, Mademoiselle Marie, come and take your medal!"

In fact, my drawing was hanging on the wall with a pin, and bore the word—*Prize.* This time I should not have been so surprised if the skies had fallen.

You must understand clearly the importance and signification of the competition.

Like all competitions, these are useful; but the prizes are not always a just indication of the talents and powers of the individuals. For it is undeniable, for example, that Breslau, whose painting was placed fifth, is in every way superior to Bang, who is placed next the medal. Bang goes *piano* and *sano;* her work is good and honest carpentry, but it is always well placed, because woman's work is in general a thing which sins by its softness and fantasy, when it is not altogether childish. The model was a youth of eighteen, who, in form and color, might be mistaken for a cat's head. Breslau has painted pictures which would easily gain the medal, but this time she has not been successful; and then, what is most appreciated by the judges is neither execution nor charm (for the charm has nothing to do with the study, it being in you or not in you, and execution is only the complement of other more serious qualities); but, above all, correctness, energy, and truth to nature.

They make no allowance for difficulties, and they are right; thus—a moderately good picture is placed after a really good drawing.

What is it, after all, that we are doing here? We study, and it is only from this point of view that these heads are judged. Mine is as effective as possible. These gentlemen despise us, and it is only when they find strong and even

Digitized by Google

brutal workmanship that they are pleased, for that particular vice is rare among women.

They said of my picture: "It is the work of a boy. It has strength. It is nature."

"I told you that we had a strong fellow up there," said Robert-Fleury to Lefebvre.

"You have the medal, Mademoiselle," said Julian, "and you have gained it easily; the judges did not hesitate."

I ordered a punch, as they always do, and Julian joined us. I was much congratulated, for most of them thought that I had arrived at the goal of my ambition, and that they would be soon rid of me.

Wick, who gained the medal the time before last, is eighth; but I consoled her by repeating that true phrase, which is, after all, the most scrupulously exact definition of such things. It was Alexander Dumas who said, "that a poor work was no proof of lack of talent, whilst a good one was a proof of its possession."

A genius may produce a poor work, but a fool can not produce a good one.

Thursday, January.—With some exceptions, the evening pupils are not the same as the day ones.

They all congratulated me, and it was a very happy time for me.

Come and receive your medal! The other evening, at Madame de M—'s house, I said, in a grave and quiet tone, showing the medal: "That represents a great deal of courage, Madame."

As a matter of fact, it represents twelve months' work. Since the fear which I felt after my meeting with royalty in Naples, the most violent sensation of my life has been that which I felt to-day in reading "*L'Homme-femme.*"

The admiration I felt for Dumas made me fancy myself, for a few moments, madly and passionately in love with this man of fifty-five, whom I have never seen.

Digitized by Google

I understood Bettina and Goethe.

Friday, January.—If I were sixteen, I should be the happiest woman on earth.

"So, then," said Robert-Fleury, "we have the prize."

"Yes, Monsieur."

"It is good, that, and you know that you have deserved it."

"Oh, Monsieur, I am pleased that you should say so!"

"Yes, richly deserved it; not only for your competitive head, but for your general work. You have made very great progress, and I am pleased that it should have fallen out thus, and that you have gained the medal. It is your just reward."

I blushed and felt awkward in listening, which lessened the pleasure of hearing it; but my aunt was there, and trembled more than I.

"Mademoiselle Breslau has made a perfect horror," said he to the Spaniard, as he went out.

"It was so difficult, Monsieur."

"Oh, ta, ta, ta! She does not work; she drops in occasionally, and if she gets no compliments she goes off and disappears for weeks. However, she has made some studies, which—"

"That head was so difficult, Monsieur," interrupted the Spaniard, who would defend the devil, if, at the same time, she could find fault with the competition.

"She does no work."

"She works at home."

"She should give her best work for the competition."

The poor man was vexed before Lefebvre and Boulanger.

Saturday, January.—I have again excited, sustained, and quieted a rebellion in the studio.

After which I went to tell Julian about it, that the facts might not be misrepresented.

Germs of greatness, germs of science, and germs of talent—

Digitized by Google

I very much fear that all these germs may go to make fodder for some unknown ass!

Oh, if I were only a man! But no, I would rather die!

Wednesday, January.—All day long I dreamed of the blue sea, white sails, and a sky full of light.

Returning from the studio, I found P—. The old mushroom said that in a week he was going to Rome, and in talking, he spoke of Katarbinskay and others, and I almost swooned before this sunny perspective—ancient marbles among the trees, ruins, statues, and churches.

The Campagna! a desert, yes; but an adorable desert, and there are others, thank God, who adore it also!

That divine, artistic atmosphere; that light, which, when I think of it, makes me weep with rage to be here! I know something of the artists there!

There are three categories of people. The first love nature, they are artists, and do not look on the Campagna as a frightful desert—cold in winter and brutal in summer. The second, who do not understand art, have no feeling for its beauty, but dare not confess it, and try to appear like the first. These latter do not wholly displease me, because they understand that they are naked and wish to be clothed. The third are like the second, less this good sentiment. How I execrate them, because they disparage and freeze. Feeling and understanding nothing for themselves, they declare that art and science are stupidities; and evil, wicked, and disgusting, they wallow in the heat of the sun.

Monday, February 3d.—Yesterday, I went to see "*L'Assommoir*," and I think it very fine; but, before going, from about 4 o'clock, till night, I tried to sketch.

I must acquire the habit of work. The others sketch every Sunday. They are given a subject and they have to make a sketch from memory.

As for me, I begin at the beginning—"Adam and Eve" on a No. 4 canvas. And now I have started, I shall do one every

Digitized by Google

evening. If I listen to myself I could not think too much of my talent. As a first trial my sketch is excellent.

I will show it to Julian, with another which I will make.

Tuesday, February 4th.—This evening the model did not come. I posed, and while I was on the table, Julian arrived, and we talked politics.

I love to chat with this clever fellow. I laugh at everybody and everything in the studio. I declaim, I orate, I amuse, I make political programmes, when I feel gay, and Julian tells me: "Go ahead, and with painting, too—with your varied talents you may be unique in Paris!"

He thinks me very spirituelle, intelligent, and sufficiently influential to rule a *salon.*

Wednesday, February 5th.—At last we have been to Versailles, the first day of Gambetta's presidency. His speech, which he read, was received with enthusiasm, as it would have been had it been even worse than it was. Gambetta read it badly, with a detestable voice. He is not fit to be President, and having seen Grévy, one asks, what will this man do? To preside over a legislature demands not only talent, but a special temperament.

Grévy presided with a mechanical regularity and precision. The first word of his speech was like the last. Gambetta has crescendoes, stoppages, additions, and withdrawals; motions of the head, up and down. . . . In short, either he is really very incoherent, or he is exceedingly sharp.

Sunday, February 16th.—I have been well scolded.

"I do not understand why, with your talents, you have so much difficulty in painting."

Nor do I understand it; but I am paralyzed. I can struggle no longer. I must die. Oh, God of goodness! Can I then expect nothing more from anyone? What revolts me just now is, that I have just filled the grate with wood without necessity, for I am not at all cold; while, perhaps, at the same moment, there are unhappy ones who are hungry and who

Digitized by Google

weep from poverty. Such reflections immediately arrest the tears which I expected to flow. Possibly it is only an idea; but I believe that I should prefer complete poverty, for then one is at the bottom, there is nothing to fear, and there is no death from hunger while one has strength to work.

Tuesday, February 18th.—Just now I fell on my knees at my bedside to ask God for justice, pity, pardon! If I have not deserved such tortures, let Him give me justice! If I have committed abominable crimes, let Him pardon me! If He exists at all, if He is such as they teach us to believe, He should be just, pitiful, and forgiving. I have but Him; it is but natural that I should seek Him, and that I should beg Him not to abandon me to despair, not to cause me to sin, nor to allow me to doubt, blaspheme, or die.

My sin is, without doubt, like my torment, I probably commit every instant little infamies which form a frightful total.

Just now I answered my aunt rudely, but I could not help it; she came in at a time when I was weeping, with my head buried in my hands, and begging God to notice me. Oh, misery of miseries!

No one must see me weep, they would think that I weep from disappointed love, and I—should weep at their mistake.

Wednesday, February 19th.—I must do something to distract myself. I say this as one imitates stupidly what is written in books. What is the use of distracting one's self? Torture is still a pleasure, and then I am not like others, and I detest all those things that are done for moral and physical cures, because I do not believe in them.

Nice, Friday, February 21st.—At last, I am in Nice!

I wished to take an air bath, to be flooded in light, and hear the noise of the waves. Do you love the sea? I am infatuated with it. It is only in Rome that I forget it—almost.

I traveled with Paul, and people insisted on taking us for husband and wife, an idea which offended me supremely. As our villa is let, we are going to the Hotel du Parc, which is the

Digitized by Google

old Villa d'Acquaviva, in which we used to live eight years ago. Eight years! I am making a pleasure trip; we are to dine at London House. Antoine, the *maître d'hôtel*, has just presented himself to me, also the ladies of the office, and then all the cab-men smile and salute, and the one whom we take compliments me on my height; he knows me. Then comes another, who offers his services, shouting that he drove Madame Romanoff; then my friends from the Rue de France. It is very kind of them, and all these good people have caused me pleasure.

The night is beautiful, and I escaped all alone until 10 o'clock. I wandered by the sea, and sang to the accompaniment of the waves.

None other was present, and it was delightful, especially after Paris—Paris!

Saturday, February 22d.—What a difference to Paris! Here I awake uncalled; the windows are open all night. The room I occupy is the one in which we took our drawing-lessons of Benza. I see the sun, which, little by little, is lighting up the trees near the little pond in the middle of the garden, as I used to see it nearly every morning. My little study has the same paper; I chose it myself. No doubt it is occupied by some wild Englishman. I recognized it by the paper, for they have built a passage which troubles me—the room in which I am was merely a window. How beautiful it is!

We take our meals at London House—this we shall do all the time that I remain at Nice; everyone goes there, specially during the carnival.

Sunday, February 23d.—Yesterday, we went to Monaco How repugnant is this nest of vice! I can never say so sufficiently. I only went into the rooms for ten minutes, but that was enough, since I do not play.

Madame Abaza, who had come for the theatre, expressed her delight at meeting me. We listened to a comic opera in the new hall, which is very beautiful, and in the modern taste.

Digitized by Google

Garnier fecit!

I took a walk in the twilight, and admired the sea and sky. What color, what transparency, what purity, what perfume!

Monday, February 24th.—I am happy when I can walk alone. The waves are of an incomparable beauty; before going to hear Patti, I listened to the waves. It had rained, and the air was delightfully fresh and cool. It does the eyes good to gaze into the deep blue of the sky and of the sea at night.

I had walked so far, that I did not notice that at one place a portion of the path had been carried away by the water, and I fell into a pit three or four feet deep.

Paris, Monday, March 3d.—I left yesterday at noon, the weather was beautiful, and I almost wept in earnest at leaving that delicious and incomparable scene. From my window I could see the garden, the *Promenade des Anglais*, and Parisian elegance. From the corridor I saw the *Rue de France*, with its old Italian dwellings, and its darkly picturesque lanes.

All the people recognized me. "It is Mademoiselle Marie," they said, as I passed. I adore the houses and the streets of Nice, although the people cause me to suffer. After all, it is my country. I should like now to leave Paris; my mind wanders, and I feel lost. I expect nothing, and I want nothing. I am desperate and resigned. I think continually. I seek and, finding nothing, I breathe one of those sighs which leave me more oppressed than before! What would you do in my place?

Now that I am in this pitiless Paris, I seem not to have gazed at the sea enough; I would wish to see it again. You remember poor Bagatelle—the dog crushed at Spa and so miraculously cured—I have brought her back with me. It would be a pity to leave her all alone. You will never be able to imagine the sweetness, the fidelity, and the affection of this beast; she never leaves me, runs under my chair, and hides herself with a face so humble and supplicating, when my aunt arrives to protect the carpets.

Digitized by Google

Tuesday, March 4th.—I have been to see Madame G—, and we went out together. She did some visiting, and, during the time, I read the papers in the carriage.

The Countess Murat and her daughter-in-law were at her house. Ah, yes; Madame G— has at last obtained a position in society! They are enthusiastic over the departure of the prince, and weep over the danger he may run, while they extol his energy. He asked no advice!

After all, if these good Zulus make a morsel of Napoleon, things will not be too desperate. The prince dead—no more party, no more obligations. There is a disposition to turn toward this rascally republic, which is, after all, the sister of the empire.

Wednesday, March 5th.—To-morrow, I shall start to work again. I allow myself a year more. A year in which I shall work even harder than before. What is the use of despair? It is an expression one uses when out of sorts, but when it seizes you—

However, my dear, despair can bring about nothing, and since nothing can be changed, let us work, there is time enough to feel discouraged afterward. Since we must drag out this life in the hope of a better, let us fill it with occupation. I have found no excuse to leave it; then, whether I read or draw—is it not the same thing? What singular reasons to induce myself to work! It is not even a *pisaller;* it is because I fear that in the future I may say: If, instead of staying in the studio, you had thought of yourself, you would perhaps have found—

Whatever you will! It is perhaps possible, but I know not how to accomplish it.

Fancy, it is atrocious, but I am always returning to the possibility of bringing my father here. Yes, indeed! Do you know what he is doing? He is refurnishing the house to receive us. Thank you! I have been there once, and that is enough. My mother and aunt are incapable of action, and

Digitized by Google

I—I have the meanness to avow—have no desire to induce them to go; and then, besides, it would not succeed if I tried.

It is just at the moment when one has given up searching that the discovery is made. In any case, painting can not hurt me. But I am helped by no one! On the contrary! Continue, my dear, make excuses to yourself to hide your want of intelligence.

Novels! songs! I write, I think, I invent, I dream! And then I stop and it is ever the same silence, the same solitude, the same room; the immovability of the furniture is a provocation, a mockery; and there am I struggling with this nightmare, whilst others live!

Fame? Bah! Fame!

I will get married. What is the use of putting it off? What do I expect? From the moment I give up painting, the field is vast. I must go to Italy and marry there. Not in Russia. A purchased Russian would be a fearful thing; moreover, in Russia, I could easily marry, particularly in the country, but I am not so foolish. At St. Petersburg? Well, if my father wished, he might make us pass a winter there. Next winter at Petersburg, then. I do not believe I love my art! It is a means to an end. I abandon it! Do I mean this? Oh, I can not be certain! Shall I give myself a year, the length of the time for which we have rented our apartment?

"To be, or not to be?"

A year is not enough. At the end of a year we shall see if we must continue. But in Italy, if I do not paint any more, I shall hear conversations about young women artists, which will annoy me and cause regret; and then every time that in Naples, or in St. Petersburg, they praise any one's talent how shall I take it? Then again, all that will be based on my beauty, and if I do not succeed? For it is not sufficient to please, it is necessary to please a particular man.

When art is eliminated, and I admit the possibility of going into society, or even the possibility of pleasing in the

Digitized by Google

street, or in the theatre—Bah! I don't know what I am saying. I will go to bed. The idea of St. Petersburg pleases me. Well, at twenty, I shall not be too old. At Paris, it is no good hoping for rich husbands; and for poor ones, Italy is the best place.

Saturday, March 8th.—I have tried to model, but I never saw it done, and can do nothing. The flower-pots and vases are filled with violets. They will last long, for they are planted in earth.

The blue satin, the violets, the light from overhead, the harp . . . not a sound, no one . . . I know not why I am so afraid of the country. I am not afraid of it, but I do not like it. However, it is delightful to repose, but I am not tired. I suffer from *ennui.*

Sunday, March 9th.—Do you know it is a great consolation to write? There are things which would destroy you, if you did not know that you could write them and that they would be read by a multitude of people.

I am pleased to find that a man like Dumas considers the quality of his paper, ink, and pens, because each time that any accessory impedes my work, I tell myself that it is idleness, and that the great painters had no such ideas.

Wait! I can understand how, seized by a sudden inspiration, Raphael drew his "Madonna della Sedia" on the bottom of a cask, but I thoroughly believe, however, that this same Raphael, to paint and finish this same picture, had recourse to all his favorite implements, and that if he had been compelled to work anywhere against his will, he would have lost his power as I, simple mortal, did in Julian's studio.

Wednesday, March 12th.—I must hang myself! However grandiloquent, impossible, and stupid the idea of killing myself may appear, it will have to come to that.

Painting does not succeed. I might say it is true that since I paint, I work anyway, and with interruptions; but all the same, I—who dreamed of being rich, happy, and in the

Digitized by Google

fashion, and surrounded by friends—to lead, drag out this miserable existence!

Mademoiselle Elsnitz is always with me, but the poor creature is so tiresome. Fancy to yourself quite a little body, a large head, with blue eyes—just like the wooden heads at the dressmakers, with pink cheeks, and blue eyes! She is just that in features and expression; add to this exterior a languid air, which, by the by, is found in all the figures of which we spoke, a slow step, but so heavy that one would think it a man's, a drawling and feeble voice; she swallows her words with an astonishing slowness; she is always absent-minded, never understands at once, and then stops in front of you and looks at you with a serious air, which either compels you to laugh or to be angry.

She often arrives in the middle of the room, and stays there, standing, without knowing where she is.

What, perhaps, is the most tiresome, is the way she opens the doors.

The operation lasts so long that each time I want to rush forward and help her. I know that she is young—nineteen. I know that she has always been unhappy, and that she is in a strange house, where she has not a friend; not a being with whom she can exchange a thought. She often makes me angry and then softens me by her gentle and passive manner; then I resolve to talk with her, but how can I? She is as repugnant to me as were the Pole and B—. I know that is wrong, but her idiotic manner paralyzes me. I know that her position is sad; however, with the Anitchkoff's, it was the same. To ask me for the least thing, to ask me to play on the piano, for example, she suffers from hesitations and tortures such as I should feel in begging for an invitation to a party or a ball. I have the excuse that I do not talk with anyone here; she is not then an exception. I work in the studio, and when taking my meals at home, I read the papers, or a book; it is a practice which I should find it difficult to give up.

Digitized by Google

I read even when practicing on the mandolin. Therefore the poor thing is not treated worse than others; I feel remorse about it, but I can not help it. I am profoundly unhappy in her society; the trips that I have to take with her in the carriage would be a veritable torture to me if I did not look out of the window and, thinking hard of something else, contrive to forget her. One easily forgets her.

Nothing is more retiring than this poor being, and also nothing is more tiresome. I should be so glad for her to find a place where she might be happy, so that she might leave here. I am ashamed to say that she spoils my desolate life for me. Oh, art of painting, if I could only acquire it!

Friday, March 14th.—Paul has just left in spite of me. I was angry and told him he should not leave, and he declared on his honor that he would leave. I held the door, but he took advantage of a moment of distraction and got away.

You see how it is, just to prove that he does not change his resolutions; he had sworn to leave to-day. In short the firmness of a feeble character which, feeling nothing in serious things, expends all its strength on trifles.

I managed to control my emotion, and I immediately obtained 20 francs from my aunt to send an angry telegram to my father at Poltava, but just then Rosalie came to tell me not to count on Champeau (who makes my dresses sometimes) as she has typhoid fever; her working-girls have left, and she is all alone. Then I had an idea—I tore up the message and sent the 20 francs to the poor woman.

There is no sensation more agreeable than a good action which can bring no return. I would go to see her (I am not afraid of typhus) but I should appear to expect thanks, whilst if I did not send this trifle at once, I might spend it, and then—let us acknowledge it would no more give me so lively a pleasure. I feel myself to be of an inexhaustible charity. To comfort the misery of others, when no soul

Digitized by Google

comforts mine, would be a very nice thing to do, do you not think so?

Saturday, March 15th.—If Robert-Fleury, nicknamed Tony in his absence, had scolded me to-day, I should have painted no more. You know how my advance has excited envy and caused me discomfort. Whenever I have been absent they seem to cry out, "I told you so; it could not last." My first canvases brought me many compliments, and then I entered on a difficult path and I felt too much the satisfaction around me at my poor efforts not to suffer extremely from it. This morning, I awaited this lesson as something terrifying, and while that animal, Tony, corrected the others and came nearer and nearer me, I said my prayers with a fervor which heaven appreciated, for he was pleased with me. Heavens! what a weight fell from my heart! Perhaps you have no idea of these emotions. Picture to yourself the silence in which I was, feeling the joy that they would have to see me crushed again; this time it would be for good, for friends or enemies are the same on such occasions. Fortunately, it is past, and next week I can support just as much scolding as they please.

Sunday, March 16th.—Coco is dead; crushed by a cart before the door. When I called him to dinner, they told me. After the grief that the loss of the first Pincio caused me, replaced by the present Pincio, this loss seems less to me, but if you have a dog born in the house, young, foolish, playful, good, and cheerful, who comes to meet you with soft and anxious eyes, unconscious as those of a child, you will understand why my loss grieves me.

Where do the souls of dogs go? This poor little thing, long, white, and hairless (for he had no hair on his back behind the shoulders), one enormous ear always erect and the other falling! I delight ten times more in an ugly dog like that than in those frightful beasts that cost so much.

He was like one of the animals in the Apocalypse or like a monster carved on the roof of Notre Dame.

Digitized by Google

Pincio does not seem to perceive that they have killed her son; it is true, that she is expecting a fresh family.

They shall all be called Coco, or Coquelicot. I believe they say that dogs have no soul, but why?

Tuesday, April 1st.—Why should gaiety be more agreeable than *ennui*? I have only to say that *ennui* pleases and amuses me.

A very convenient reminiscence of the manual of Epictetus, you say? But I might reply that impressions are involuntary. To live no longer! That is the point I wish to reach. It would be much shorter to—but no, then all would be finished.

There is nothing so hateful in the world as not to be of the world; to live a hidden life; to see no one interesting; to be unable to exchange an idea; to see neither celebrated nor popular men. It is death; it is worse than the nether regions!

I will only speak of what are conventionally called misfortunes. We should not rebel against them, nor complain. The misfortunes themselves are enjoyments, and should be accepted as the very elements of life. Suppose that I lose a much-loved friend, do you think that does not affect me? On the contrary, I should be desperate; I should weep, groan, and cry aloud; then it would resolve itself into sadness for a long while, perhaps forever.

I do not find that agreeable. I do not desire it, I do not prefer it; but I am compelled to say that that would be life, and consequently enjoyment.

After the loss of a husband or child, or the deception of a friend, one utters cries of reproach against destiny. I should no doubt do the same. These manifestations are in the regular order of things, and God is not offended with them, neither is man offended with them, feeling that they are the natural and inevitable consequences of the grief experienced. One groans, but one does not cry from the bottom of the soul that it ought not to be.

Without perceiving that we do so, we accept it.

Digitized by Google

After some great misfortune one longs to be alone; to enter a convent. Understand, I say after some great misfortune. It happens, also, often, that one is happy all alone—that is to say, with a husband, or with parents of whom one thinks and for whom one lives!—but I, I speak for persons entirely solitary; besides, to-day, I have a grudge against my family as being one of the causes of my sufferings. Again, I do not speak for the silent and unknown heroes, described in novels by people who invent them, or copy them from nature, because I can not be like them.

Do you imagine that I complain of a quiet life and desire excitement? That may be; but it is not that alone.

I love solitude, and I even think that if I truly *lived*, I should isolate myself at times for reading, meditation, and repose. In such cases it is a charm, a sweet and exquisite happiness. In great heat it is enchanting to bury one's self in a cave, but not to rest there long, or forever.

Now, if some clever person wished to give himself the trouble of confuting me, he would ask if I would consent to purchase life by the death of my mother, for example. To that I would reply that I would not wish it, even at the price of a less treasured life, since, according to nature, one's mother is the most loved.

I should suffer fearful remorse; I would not wish it from very egotism.

Thursday, April 3d.—After all, life is pleasant. I sing and dance when I am quite alone, for complete solitude is a great enjoyment; but what torture when it is broken by servants or relations!—especially by one's relations! Listen! this morning, returning from the studio, I thought myself happy, and you would not believe what affection I found in my heart for my family, for my kind aunt, full of devotion and self-denial; but now, I am no longer happy.

That poor Elsnitz spoils my life. I no longer drink tea, because she pours it out, and when I am obliged to eat bread

Digitized by Google

which she has touched—faugh! I would be willing to get heart disease by rushing, like a mad girl, upstairs, to be a moment without her, if I could only accomplish it. To pass the decanter or vinegar cruet, I handle them awkwardly sooner than touch where she has touched. She has something of the worm about her. This poor creature, with her plaintive air and dirty nails, worries me to death.

Saturday, April 5th.—Robert-Fleury is sick and has scarcely made any examination; what I have done is not very good.

Sarah wants to reconcile me with Breslau. I raise objections; but I should, in reality, be very glad.

The artificial leaves over the fire-place took fire from the blue candles, and the mirror is broken.

But misfortunes do not happen because a mirror breaks. Mirrors break when misfortunes are about to happen; one should be thankful for the warning.

Sunday, April 6th.—I have such a quiet hat that I am not afraid to pass my time alone at the Louvre; but since, although it is particularly quiet, the hat suits me, I made the conquest of a young artist, who followed me all the time and risked a bow in a corridor, where there was no one else; but I took no notice and he was much embarrassed.

Tuesday, April 15th.—Julian, when he came, announced the death of our Emperor. I was so much agitated by it that I understood nothing of what was said. All rose to look at me. I turned pale, tears rose to my eyes, and my lips trembled. Having seen me always in a laughing mood, Julian, in his kindness, wished to laugh. The truth is that a man has fired four shots at the Emperor, quite close to him, but the Emperor was not hit.

And Julian slapped his knee and cried that he would never have believed me capable of so much emotion. But neither would I have believed it myself.

Wednesday, April 16th.—A rather curious talk with Breslau. We were in the antechamber—she, Sarah, and I. I gave an

Digitized by Google

orange to Sarah, who offered half of it to Breslau, and said to her, laughingly: "Take it, it is from me and not from Mademoiselle Marie." And while she was hesitating, I stopped washing my brushes, and turning toward her, said, smiling: "I offer it to you." She was quite confused, took the orange, and blushed. I also.

"You see what it is to have oranges," said I, peeling a second. "Take some more, Mademoiselle."

"Look, Sarah, how we are both blushing."

"It is so stupid," said Sarah.

"I am overwhelming you with kindness," I said, laughingly, to Breslau, offering her a new slice.

"You see what little notice I take of you," said she, taking it.

"Not less than I of you. But if you care so little, you would not blush so."

"I care little for myself."

"Ah, very good!"

As it was commencing to become affecting, I laughed and looked at her.

"I admire you."

"Me?" asked Breslau.

"Yes, you."

"You are right to do so."

"Of course."

And it was all over.

"Are you coming, Sarah?" said Breslau. I returned to my task. "How childish!"

Friday, April 18th.—I was looking for an empire or directory head-dress, which made me read about Madame Récamier, and naturally I was humiliated in thinking that I, too, might have a *salon*, and have not.

Idiots will cry out that I think myself as beautiful as Récamier and as witty as a goddess.

Let the idiots cry, and let us be content by saying that I merit a better lot, in proof of which all those who see me

Digitized by Google

imagine that I rule and that I am a remarkable woman. I draw a deep sigh, and say to myself: My day will come, perhaps—I am accustomed to the idea of God. I tried not to believe in Him, but I can not help it. What a confusion without Him! What a chaos! I have only God, a God Who is interested in all my little affairs, and to Whom I tell everything.

Monday, April 21st.—The last day of the competition was pretty animated.

On Saturday I went with Lisen, the Swede, to see the artists of Batignolles, near Montmartre cemetery, away up on the heights. I discovered that I hate only the boulevards and new parts of Paris.

Old Paris, and the higher parts, where I was on Saturday, breathe a perfume of poetry and tranquillity, which took complete possession of me.

Tuesday, May 6th.—I am very busy and very happy. I was troubled because I had too much leisure; I realize that now. For about three weeks, I have worked from 8 to 12 and from 2 to half-past 5 and sometimes to 7; and after that, sometimes a few sketches and some reading, or, perhaps, a little music; by 10 o'clock, I am only fit to go to bed.

This is an existence which leaves no time for thinking of the shortness of life.

Music, in the evening, calls up Naples. Such things trouble me. I will read Plutarch.

Wednesday, May 7th.—If this rage for work could last, I should declare myself perfectly happy. I adore drawing and painting, composition and sketching, pencil and crayon work. I have not a single desire for rest or idleness.

I am happy! A month of days like this represents the progress of six ordinary months.

It is so amusing and pleasant that I fear it will not last. In such moments I require faith in myself.

Thursday, May 8th.—My poor childhood saw proofs of love in the interest I took in reading histories of cardinals in the

Digitized by Google

time of A—. . . . To-day I read histories of painters with the same interest, and I even have palpitations of the heart in listening to studio stories.

Monday, May 12th.—I am pretty, happy, and light-spirited. We went to the *Salon* and then we had a general talk, because we met Berand, the painter, whom we puzzled at the ball and who passed close by us without suspecting it.

Breslau's painting is a fine large canvas filled up with a beautiful chair in gilt leather in which her friend Marie is sitting in a green dress, and a grayish-blue something round the neck. One hand holds a portrait and a flower, the other a packet of letters which she has just tied up with a red ribbon. A simple arrangement and a common subject. The drawing is admirable, and the general harmony of tones gives a charming effect.

I fear that I am going to utter an enormity, but you must acknowledge that we have not a single great artist. There is Bastien Lepage; where are the rest? Plenty of knowledge, technique, and conventionality, too much conventionality, far too much.

There is nothing true, vibrating, soaring, nothing to take hold of you, to make you shiver or weep.

I am not speaking of sculpture. I have seen too little of it to be able to say anything. When one sees the atrocious trivialities of *genre* pictures and the wretched, pretentious mediocrities in ordinary, or even good portraits, one nearly loses courage.

To-day, I found only one good thing, Bonnat's portrait of Victor Hugo, and perhaps Breslau's picture.

Breslau's chair is badly drawn, the lady looks as if she were clinging on to it, for fear of falling forward; it is a pity. I name Bonnat because he gets the truth, and Breslau because I find that all her calm tones harmonize.

I can not endure L—, who paints the same toes in all his figures. It irritates and enrages me.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, May 14th.—Instead of going to the *Salon* I worked at my sketch: "The Death of Orpheus."

I do not believe that composition is more trouble to me than drawing. My ideas run on fame, happiness, and everything that is best in the world.

Friday, May 16th.—The *Salon* has this bad thing about it, that in seeing the failures, the wretched failures that are there, one begins to think something of one's self, when one is as yet a nonentity.

Friday, May 30th.—Jeanne posed for me and we kept her for dinner.

I need not tell you that she is of good family, well brought up, thoroughly educated, and intelligent. She dresses poorly and people take her for a rail, while, in reality, she has the most beautiful form one can find; at the same time, she is dark and thin.

She has magnificent eyes, with mouth and nose in proportion. Her nose is very large, but beautiful and noble. A swan's neck. She reminds me of the Queen of Italy, even though she is a brunette; her skin is not dark, however, but very white.

As you know, she married Baron W—, a fearful brute of a man.

The poor woman was near death when her family saved her by suing for a separation. Poor woman! She hates him. You easily understand that, in such a case, it is better to drown than live with one's husband. She is one of the Temple women we read of in "*L'Homme-Femme.*"

Thursday, June 5th.—Jeanne posed and then we went together to see Madame de Souza who receives Thursdays. In the evening to the L—'s; mamma went with me, though still in mourning.

Monsieur de L— took a candle and conducted us to see the children all in bed and asleep. He was quite like a guide in a museum of curiosities. All the guests are taken by turn to see the nine miracles (considering the father's age).

Digitized by Google

Saturday, June 7th.—Madame de L— sent us seven of her children with three nurses.

But I ought to say first that the tone of my picture was not bad (for me that is the most important thing), but the construction! Robert-Fleury scolded me. It is not, however, so very disastrous, since I pay more attention to color. I forget the construction, which comes in when the color is no longer troubling me. One can not lose what one has gained. All the same I am blue.

These children of the L—'s are very curious. They are accustomed to being made a show of, and go through a regular set of movements. After five minutes they were quite at home. They wanted their portraits taken, and each posed in turn. I sketched the seven in four or five minutes. The eldest decided that they were well done, and then he made me put the number and name under each.

I feel idiotic, out of sorts, stupid!

Monday, June 9th.—No doubt it is the heavy, warm weather which makes me good-for-nothing. But I have worked all day. I have quite decided not to miss any more work, but it is killing me. To-night we shall go to the ball at the foreign ministry. I shall be ugly. I am sleepy, and would rather go to bed.

I am not thirsty for admiration, and I feel that I shall be unpleasant and stupid.

I no longer even think of conquests. I dress well, but I no longer put soul into it, and I never remember to think of the effect I may be producing. I look at nothing and no one, and am thoroughly tired; painting is the only thing left. I have no more wit, no more society conversation. When I want to speak I am dull or extravagant, and then—I must make my will, for this can not last long.

Saturday, June 14th.—I drew this morning and they said it was not up to my standard.

Enough of society!

Digitized by Google

Sunday, June 15th.—For the moment I throw off all my anxieties, and am quite decided to work. Julian is a great man in the way in which he treats the duties which fall on me, and he says I *must* succeed, precisely because—We understand one another, oh, kind posterity! Do we not?

"I must begin next year," the illustrious director of the Folies-Julian is always saying.

Yes; it is determined upon, and you will see, Grandfather Julian, that I come of a courageous race.

Of course you praise me for the money I bring, and the honor I shall bring to the studio. What does it matter? And then, whether I do well or ill, you are paid just the same.

You shall see if I do not die! My heart beats, and I have a fever, when I think I have only a few months left.

I shall work as much as possible all the time. To-morrow I go to Versailles, but if I miss lessons only to go to Versailles, it will not be anything very bad *at the most*, one afternoon a week.

Julian has already detected a respectable improvement in my work, and I never fail to make my weekly study of compositions. I keep an album, in which I sketch, and number these sketches with titles, marking the dates of each.

Saturday, June 21st.—I have been crying for nearly thirty-six hours. I went to bed exhausted yesterday.

We had two Russians to dinner, Abigink and Sevastianoff, gentlemen of the Chamber to the Emperor, Tchoumakoff and Bojidar, but I was good-for-nothing. My skeptical and mocking spirit had disappeared. It has happened to me to lose relatives and to have other causes for grief, but I think I have never wept for any one as I have for him who is just dead, and it is the more strange, because there is no reason why it should affect me. I ought rather to be glad. Yesterday, at noon, I was leaving the studio, when Julian whistled to the servant, who placed her ear to the tube and said to us at once, in a voice that showed emotion: "Ladies,

Digitized by Google

Monsieur Julian desires to inform you that the Prince Imperial is dead."

I assure you that I shrieked. I sat down on the coal-box, and while everyone was speaking at once, she continued:

"A moment's silence, if you please, ladies. It is official; the telegram has just been received. He was killed by the Zulus. Monsieur Julian says so."

The report had been about for some time, so when I was brought the *Estafette* with the words in large print, "Death of the Prince Imperial," I can not tell you how much I was affected.

Moreover, to whatever party one belongs, whether French or foreigner, it is impossible not to feel the general impression, which is one of stupor.

This fearful, ill-timed death is a terrible thing.

But I will say what none of the papers do: The English are cowards and assassins. It is not natural. There must be one or several men guilty, infamous traitors! Is it usual to expose to such danger a prince? the hope of his party? a son? No! I believe that even a wild beast would melt in thinking of the mother. The most terrible misfortunes, the most cruel losses always leave something, a ray, a suspicion of consolation, of hope. In this case there is nothing! It may be said without fear of extravagance that this is a grief that has never been equaled. She was the cause of his leaving, she worried him, tormented him. She would not give him five hundred francs a month, and made life a burden to him. The son left on bad terms with his mother.

Do you comprehend the bitterness of the thing? Think of the woman!

There are very unhappy mothers, but not one has ever felt such a blow as this; for all the rumors, and sympathy, and blame, in connection with this death, will only serve to increase her grief.

The monster who announced this news to her had better have killed her.

Digitized by Google

I went to the studio, and Robert-Fleury much complimented me; but I came back to sob again, and then I went to Madame G—'s, where everyone is in mourning, with swollen eyes, from the *concierge* upward.

"Monsieur Rouher was an hour without speaking. They thought it was all over, then he burst into tears and Madame Rouher has had nervous attacks all the evening, crying that her husband will die, and that she will die, too."

Then Madame G— stopped her story and said, with an air of conviction: "Really, on such occasions, one should manage not to have nervous attacks. It is very inconvenient," she added, very seriously.

I held back my tears, for they could not have understood how I felt; but I could not help smiling when I heard Madame G— tell her story to some ladies in mourning, and say that Madame Rouher, when she heard the news, fell *flat on her back*. There will be mourning for six months. People will tire of it long before; but, you understand, for the first few days—.

The English have always behaved badly to the Bonapartes, who have continually been stupid enough to turn for help to that ignoble England, a country which I hate and despise.

The passions are easily excited; one weeps freely over a novel. How can one help being moved to the bottom of the soul by this overwhelming catastrophe—this horrible, hateful, pitiful end! I have, all along, thought that C— would incline to the Jerome family, and that has happened.

Here is a whole party without a leader. They must have a prince, if only a make-believe one, and I think they will be united in their choice. Some, the least compromised, will join the republic, but the others will continue to support some shadow. Who can tell? Did they not say when the King of Rome died that all was over?

Death! at such a time! Death at twenty-three! Killed by savages while fighting for the English!

Digitized by Google

I believe that, at the bottom of their hearts, his cruelest enemies feel something of remorse.

I have read all the papers, even those which insult his memory. I watered them with my tears.

If I were a Frenchman and a Bonapartist, I could not be more shocked, more grieved. Think of this child whom the insinuations of the infamous radical papers compelled to go to Zululand! Think of this child who was attacked and assassinated by savages!

The cries that he uttered, his desperate appeals, his suffering, the horror of helplessness! To die in an unknown, frightful corner, abandoned, almost betrayed! Then to set out, in that way, alone with Englishmen!

The poor mother!

And the English papers are sufficiently infamous to insinuate that there was no danger in the place where the reconnaissance was made. Can there be any safety for a troop of only a few men in such a country in the midst of savage enemies?

One must be foolish or idiotic to believe it. But read the details. He was left there three days, and it was only when too late that Carey noticed that the prince was missing.

When he saw the Zulus, he ran off with the others, without troubling about the prince.

No, think of it, to see it in print in their papers and know that this nation is not exterminated; that their wretched island and their cold, barbarous, perfidious, infamous people can not be annihilated! Oh, if it were in Russia! But our soldiers would rather have died to the last man!

And these wretches abandoned him, betrayed him! Read the details, I say, and you will be struck with their infamy and cowardice.

Do soldiers take flight without defending their comrades?

And Lieutenant Carey is not to be hanged? The mother, too; the Empress, poor *Empress!* All is finished, lost,

Digitized by Google

annihilated! Nothing remains save a poor mother in mourning.

Monday, June 23d.—I am still under the painful impression of this terrible event. The public, recovering a little from the first stupor, begins to ask by what criminal carelessness the poor child was given up to the savages.

The English press is excited about the cowardice of the prince's companions. And I, who have no concern in the matter, my breath leaves me, and the tears rise in my eyes. I have never been more disturbed, and the efforts I make all day not to weep are painful. It is said that the Empress died last night; but no paper confirms this terrible, yet consoling news. My heart is full of rage when I think how easy it would have been to prevent this crime, this misfortune, this infamy!

One still sees terrified faces in the streets, and the papersellers weep. And I—I do like the papersellers, acknowledging all the time that it can not be explained away, that it is unnatural. I should like to put on real mourning, with crape that would correspond with my feelings.

"How does it concern you?" people will say. I do not know why it affects me, but I know that it does.

Not a soul! I am shut up in my room. I am not posing, and I melt into tears, which is very silly, because it weakens my eyes. I felt it already this morning, while working. But I can find no rest from the thought of the fatal, horrible, fearful circumstances which surround this death, of the baseness of his companions.

It would have been so easy to prevent it!

Wednesday, July 2d.—Having read more statements by English soldiers, I arrived at the studio so upset that I was obliged to blot out my painting and leave.

By Saturday, I shall have the time to draw Dina in profile; she has become more beautiful in proportion as I have become ill-looking.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, July 16th.—I am extraordinarily tired; they say that typhoid fever begins this way.

I have had bad dreams. What if I were about to die? I am quite astonished that I am not afraid of death. If there be another life, it must certainly be better than the one I lead here; and if there be nothing after death, there is the more reason to fear nothing, and to wish to see an end of all my trials without fame, and torments without glory. I must absolutely make my will.

I begin to work at light in the morning, and by 5 I am so tired that my evening is wasted. Yes, I must make my will.

Monday, July 21st.—Decidedly, we have no summer; it gets colder and colder.

This week's model, for all day, is a brunette of astonishing beauty.

She has a statuesque figure, and exquisite coloring. She will not long be a model, so we take all the advantage possible.

Sunday, August 3d.—My dog Coco II. has disappeared. It happened while we were at the theatre. I was surprised not to see him rush forward on my arrival, and I went to look for him among the others; then they told me he was lost. It does not matter to you, but I loved this poor creature intensely, I who had christened him, and had attached myself to him as much as he to me.

You can not understand how much I feel it. I stayed all day long working with this dog for my constant companion. My family, who know how pained I am, keep a dead silence.

Mamma was on the move all the evening.

When I came in, I went down-stairs to the street to beg the policeman to bring him back if they found him.

All the servants have been told to find the dog or they will be dismissed. This is the fourth dog in a year—first Pincio, then Coco I., eight days ago, Niniche, and now Coco II.

Monday, August 4th.—I could not sleep. I have always in

Digitized by Google

my sight that poor little stupid dog who was frightened away by the carriage, and knew not where to go.

I even deigned to shed a few tears, after which I prayed God to help me find him. I have a special prayer that I say to myself, when I beg for anything. I never remember to have used it without consolation.

This morning, they awakened me, bringing back the dog, and the poor thing was so hungry that he was not very affectionate.

I had looked on him as lost, and the family kept saying that he had been killed, to set me at rest.

Mamma declares that it is a real miracle that we ever found the dog. She would think it still more miraculous if I told her of my prayer; but I shall only speak of it on this paper, and I do not like even to do that. There are thoughts and prayers of so individual a character that they seem stupid and aimless when written down.

Saturday, August 9th.—Shall I go or stay? The trunks are packed. My doctor does not seem to believe in the waters of Mont Dore. What does it matter? I go there for rest, and when I return, I shall lead a life of constant work.

I shall paint as long as it is light, and work at sculpture at night.

Wednesday, August 13th.—We arrived at Dieppe at 1 o'clock last night.

Are all sea-side towns the same? I have been at Ostend, Calais, Dover, and am at Dieppe. It smells of tar, boats, ropes, and sail-cloth. It blows, and we are exposed on every side; it is distressing. It savors of sea-sickness. What a difference from the Mediterranean! There one can breathe, there is something to admire, it is comfortable. Besides, it does not smell of all these wretched things. I turn with pleasure to a pretty little nest of verdure such as Soden or Schlangenbad, and as Mont Dore must be.

I come here to breathe. Yes. Possibly outside the town

Digitized by Google

the air is better. I do not like these northern towns. The sea is only visible from the third stories of the hotels. Oh, Nice! Oh, San Remo! Oh, Naples! Oh, Sorrento! You are not empty words. You are not exaggerated nor profaned by the travelers' guide books. You are truly beautiful and divine.

Saturday, August 16th.—We laugh a good deal and I am very tired, but to laugh is natural to me and independent of my humor.

I used to be interested in the passers-by at a watering-place; they amused me. But I am now completely indifferent; whether there are dogs or men around me, is just the same. I still amuse myself best when I am alone in playing or painting. I expected to be in the world quite another thing than I am; and once it is not what I thought, it matters not to me what it may be.

It is impossible to deny that I have been unfortunate all the time.

Tuesday, August 19th.—I took my first sea-bath and the whole thing makes me want an excuse for crying. I would sooner dress as a mussel-gatherer than as I do. What an unhappy nature mine is! I would like an exquisite harmony in every detail of life; frequently, things which pass for elegant and pretty shock me by a want of art, of grace, and of I know not what. I should like to see my mother, elegant, intellectual, and at least dignified and proud. Wretched state of existence! In truth, no one ought to be so punished.

Trifles? All is relative, and if a pin gives you as much pain as a knife, what have the wiseacres to say?

Wednesday, August 20th.—I do not believe that I can ever feel a sentiment in which ambition has no part. I despise people who are not of some importance.

Thursday, August 21st.—This morning I went to make a sketch of Mère Justin, who is seventy-three. She has had nineteen children and sells sand.

Digitized by Google

People came but I pretended to notice no one, and then there came a troop of soldiers to drill on the beach, and presently a beating rain, but I will go back to-morrow. It amuses me to sketch in the open air; these canvases will set off my studio.

It is perfectly understood, I hope. I affect no artistic exterior nor those abominable airs of people who smear canvas, without talent, and dress as artists.

Dieppe, Friday, August 22d.—Oh, sublime Balzac! You are the greatest of earth's geniuses; wherever one turns, it is always the sublimest comedy.

I have just seen two women, who, from their origin, faces, and life make me think of Balzac, that great, inexhaustible, incredible genius.

My people are back from the theatre. They think Madame de S— is plain. That is, in fact, what everybody says.

How is it I find her so charming?

I am willing to admit that she is not pretty, but with my artistic eye I am seduced by a certain fine quality in the lines of her lips and fine angular nose. She has no wrinkles on her cheeks, no pockets under her eyes, and moreover has exquisite manners.

Friday, August 29th.—Fatalism is the religion of the idle and desperate. I am desperate and swear that I do not care for life. I would not utter this absurdity if I only thought it for the moment, but I think it always, even in my most happy hours. I despise death. If there is nothing beyond, it is a simple matter, and if there is something, I commend myself to God. But I do not think I shall go to heaven, for these earthly tortures will still continue there; they are devoted to them there.

Monday, September 1st.—I hope you have noticed the great change which has taken place in me little by little.

I am become serious and reasonable, and then I pierce deeper into certain ideas. I understand many things which I

Digitized by Google

did not understand and of which I spoke formerly according to the circumstances without any convictions. I have grasped to-day, for example, that it is possible to have a great affection for and to love an idea as one loves one's self.

Devotion to princes, to dynasties, affects me, fires me, makes me weep and would, perhaps, under the direct impulse of some stirring event, make me act; but I have a profound sentiment which prevents my absolutely approving of myself in all these heart-burning fluctuations. Each time I think of the great men who have served under other men, my admiration for them halts and disappears. It is a sort of foolish vanity, perhaps, but I think them almost despicable, these servants, and I am only a royalist when I put myself in the place of the king. Now understand, Gambetta is not a mere vulgarly ambitious man; the intuition which makes me think this must be strong and well based or I could not say it sincerely after being for three hours steeped in the reactionary press.

As to myself, I have no objection to seeing myself bow before kings, but I can neither love nor completely esteem a man who would so bow.

I do not, however, reject the rays shed by royalty! No! it is quite natural, is it not, that I should be charmed to be the wife of an attaché or an ambassador, or to be about a court? Unfortunately, such men have no fortune, they need to seek a dowry.

Now here I am speaking my innermost sentiments. I have always thought this; but one does not always know how to say what one thinks. I admit a constitutional royalty as in Italy, or in England, with some hesitation. I am disgusted with these salutations of the royal family; it is a useless humiliation. It is all very well when the king is sympathetic, as was Victor Emmanuel, who represented and worked out a great idea, and as is Queen Marguerite, who is adorable and kind; but these are happy accidents, and it is much more natural to have an

Digitized by Google

elected head; one consequently always sympathetic, and who is surrounded by an intelligent aristocracy.

An aristocracy is neither destroyed nor created in a day; it must be supported; but not on that account be shut up as in a stupid citadel.

Ancient dynasties are the negation of progress and of intelligence.

They cry out against mere men; but why?

Men disappear and can be got rid of when no longer useful. They say that the Republican party is full of men of tarnished characters. Some months ago I explained my ideas about that.

They speak of absurd hate against the persons of kings. That is not the question. It is not that the man is bad; but that the function is useless.

I respect illustrious families; they always have existed, exist now, and will exist. The country ought to honor them; but between that and stupidly carrying on one's back forever a man and his posterity . . . No, none of that. I am not speaking against the power of race; on the contrary.

Cæsarism copies the Romans. Why copy? If the people are deceived by intrigues and disloyal maneuvers, it is their own fault; but with kings there is no necessity for intelligent effort, they can not even choose, nine times out of ten. It is the uncertain, the unknown, routine, imbecility, and cowardice. If the people be stupid and choose badly, they merit nothing better. These reflections are answers to the usual remarks against the republic.

But understand clearly. . . . My republic is a republic enlightened, polished, and aristocratic. What shall I call it? Athenian *he* called it. The word aristocratic requires reflections and explanations. Birth, manners, and education, even if there be no great intelligence, are the attributes of aristocracy. Yes, for in social relations there are things the influence of which can not be denied. Besides, there is only one possible equality—equality in the eyes of the law—all other equalities

Digitized by Google

are but poor comedies, invented by the enemies of liberty, or begged for by the ignorant.

Wednesday, September 3d.—The arrival of those who had been transported, wearing caps of liberty and red sashes, is a disgraceful thing. They ought never to have been allowed to return. They had settled down where they were and will be foreigners here. God only knows what complication may arise from this return of husbands and wives after ten years' absence.

I have no time to tell you how I should treat those mistaken people who demanded this return.

Paris, Wednesday, September 17th.—To-day is a Wednesday, a favorable day, a seventeenth, a good day for me to commence to learn sculpture. I have been to see about the studios. Robert-Fleury came yesterday to the studio; there was not much to correct, so he gave me some good advice, persuading me to persevere with my painting, which I know scarcely anything of at present.

And so I am to work at sculpture by gas-light, instead of drawing. You understand I lose nothing by doing so, as I paint as long as it is light and when day is gone, turn to sculpture. Is it arranged? Yes, indeed. I took a walk with the strong Swede, Amanda. She told me of her visit to Tony (who was very kind to me yesterday) and with whom she talked of all the students. He told her that A— would always fail in drawing and construction. It is a fact that she produces senseless pictures, swollen heads, eyes awry, etc. As for Breslau, he said she had not made enough progress, and Julian added that her talent was one due to application. Emma has good powers, but will not work, and has foolish ideas. He said of me: "Well endowed naturally, a good worker, applies herself to art severely, astonishing and rapid progress, good drawing"—in a word, a concert of praise. I suppose it is true, since it is told to strangers, and I am glad, for it gives me courage. I will work better and longer on account of it.

Digitized by Google

I want to go to the country, a true country place with trees, lawns, and a park. I want verdure like that of Schlangenbad or Soden instead of this stupid and dried up Dieppe. And they tell me I do not like the country.

I am not fond of the country in Russia, of the neighbors, the houses—but I adore trees and pure air to such a degree that I wish to pass a fortnight in some corner very green and very sweet with perfume, as before I wished to go to Rome. But of Rome I scarcely ever speak, even in this diary—the subject drives me wild, and I wish to be tranquil.

I was crossing the Tuileries gardens when I was seized with all these ideas of *villeggiatura*. What do I expect? I love it as much as I hate the sandy and windy beach. But to pass a fortnight in Switzerland with my family would be very tiresome. Tiffs, recriminations, and all the accessories of domestic happiness would be there.

Wednesday, October 1st.—Here are the papers and I have just read the 300 pages of the first number of Madame Adam's review. It disturbed me somewhat and I left the studio at 4 to drive in the Bois with a new hat which attracted attention; but now, what is that to me? I think Madame Adam must be very happy.

I suppose you know me well enough to understand the influence that all these living questions exercise on my poor brain. I have no room for my old loyalty of feeling. I still love violets, but only as a flower; not as a symbol.

I turn to the republic and the new ideas. To-day I am deep in the "*Revue Nouvelle.*" Who knows whether at some moment I may not become enthusiastic over Prince Napoleon, whom, for that matter, I prefer to Napoleon III., and who really amounts to something? No; understand that I am not joking, and that I am very advanced in my politics. One must move with the times, more especially when you have the real desire and irresistible longing to mingle in politics.

Saturday, October 11th.—I left my drawing of the head in

Digitized by Google

the middle of the week, consequently when Róbert-Fleury passed from the large studio to the little one, I concealed myself among the cloaks, but he saw me and reproached me mildly. As I answered he continued along the passage, shaking his head and looking at me, so that, not looking ahead, he ran his nose against the door and I laughed. Of course he was very chilly in correcting my torso and said nothing kind. Any other time, with the same canvas, I should have succeeded better; so I am unhappy, out of sorts, miserable, and if Julian had not cheered me up a little in the composition, I should have thrown myself on the ground in despair. Every Saturday's emotion costs me dearly. If the professors could suspect the torments I undergo they would not have the courage to say anything.

Saturday, October 25th.—My painting is "better, much better." The other day we did the hour's sketch for places, and this morning they were exhibited in the little room, where Tony shuts himself up. He refuses absolutely to number them, saying that it is impossible; that an hour's work is of no account, and finally that he will put numbers by chance with his back turned. If it were not serious it would be amusing, for we were listening at the door.

"Mademoiselle Marie," said he, "you are young. I might have placed you first; that means nothing. Another time you will give me your week's studies, according to which I will place you. This way is not common sense."

With No. 3 I shall have a very good place for the competition.

Gambetta has returned to Paris.

Thursday, October 30th.—France is a charming and amusing country. It has riots, revolutions, fashions, wit, grace, elegance—all that gives charm to life—the unforeseen. But you must not look for a serious government, nor a virtuous man (in the ancient meaning of the word), nor a marriage of love, nor even true wit. They are very strong, the French painters;

Digitized by Google

but with the exception of Géricault, and in our time, Bastien-Lepage, the divine inspiration is lacking. And never, never, never will France produce what Italy and Holland have produced in their special directions.

A fine country for gallantry and pleasure, but—but nevertheless the other countries, with their solidly respectable qualities, are often tiresome. If, however, I complain of France it is because I am not married. France for young girls is an infamous country; yes, infamous is not too strong. It is impossible to exhibit more cold cynicism in the wedding of two beings than is done here when a man and a woman are married.

Commerce, trade, speculation, are honorable words applied properly, but applied to marriage they are infamous, and still, they are the most appropriate in speaking of French marriages.

Saturday, November 8th.—I have finished the portrait of the *concierge*. It is very like. They feel great joy in the room. Her daughter, stepson, grandchildren, and sister are all in ecstasy.

Unfortunately Tony did not share their enthusiasm. He began by saying that it was not bad, but that it was not as good as it should have been. I can not deny that I have not as much the gift of painting as of drawing. Drawing, construction, form, come of themselves. The pictorial side of my character does not develop quickly enough. He says I lose time in this way. I must stop, he says, and prepare myself.

"You are wasting your time, it is evident; and since you are much gifted, since you show great taste, I am sorry."

"It does not please me either, Monsieur, but I do not know what to do about it."

"I have wished to talk it over with you for a long while. We must try all possible means, perhaps it is only necessary to give you a few hints."

"Tell me what I must do, must I draw from a copy, from plaster, or from still life? I will do whatever you prescribe."

Digitized by Google

"You will do all I tell you to? well, then, we are certain to find a way out. Come and see me on Saturday, and we will speak of it."

I ought to have gone on a Saturday long ago, all the students do it. He is a good fellow.

Monday, November 10th.—I went to church yesterday. I go from time to time to show that I am not a nihilist.

I say very often, laughingly, that life is only a transition state. I wish I could believe it, to console me for my misery, my brutal sufferings, my unworthy doubts and fears.

The whole world is such a sham. I feel so much disgust and astonishment at shams every day, that I know myself free from such sickening meanness.

Friday, November 14th.—If for several days I have written nothing, it is because there has been nothing interesting to write.

Thus far I have been charitable to my fellow-beings. I have neither said nor repeated evil things. I have always defended those who were attacked in my presence, from the selfish feeling that one day they might do as much for me. I have defended even those I did not know, praying God to make them do the same for me. I never had a serious idea of hurting anyone, and if I wished for wealth or power, it was with ideas of generosity, goodness, and charity whose breadth astounds me. But that did not succeed. I shall continue to give 20 sous to the beggars in the street, because the poor souls bring tears to my eyes, but I fear I shall become ill-tempered.

It would be beautiful to remain good, though much tried and unhappy. But it would be amusing to become cross, bad, backbiting, harmful, since it is all the same in the eyes of God, and He notices nothing. Besides, we must learn to believe that God is not what we imagine Him to be. God is perhaps Nature herself, and all the events of life are governed by chance, which at times brings about strange coincidences

Digitized by Google

and events which compel a belief in a Providence. As to our prayers to God, our faith in Him, our conversations with Him, I have learned to my cost that they are worse than useless.

To feel one's power, to have strength to move heaven and earth, and to be nothing! I do not complain aloud, but all these struggles are written on my face. People say that these things are of no consequence so long as we keep silent, but they come again and again to the surface.

Saturday, November 15th.—I admire Zola, but there are some things of which everybody speaks which I can neither bring myself to say, nor even to write. I have no hesitation in talking slang occasionally, but there are certain filthy things (I do not mean immoral) that disgust me.

Wednesday, November 19th.—Robert-Fleury came this evening; and besides giving me good advice, we passed a pleasant evening around the *samovar* and in my studio, the more so as he explained to me very clearly how to manage the lamps. Tony is not paid, nor in any way pecuniarily interested; he is too, a man of standing; he repeated this evening what he told Madame Breslau, that of all the students, her daughter and myself alone had unusual gifts. The rest amounted to nothing. He spoke of each one, and it amused me to see the way in which he treated the conceited girls.

Of me he only spoke well, when I went out of the room. But he insisted on my continuing, adding that he was certain of my reaching a good result; that for an amateur I already showed talent, but that I might look much higher; that with continual guidance I should make greater progress; that he would take special charge of me; and he advised me not to work all the time at the studio, but occasionally to have a model at home, and to devote the evening to sculpture. He will come and give me the first hints, and some night he will bring Chapu.

In a word, I am quite under his wing. So to recompense

Digitized by Google

him a little, I ordered my portrait, a small size; but it spoils my happiness. I fear it may be too dear.

He has been as kind as possible all the evening, talking and advising. What tires me is to make my copies.

Saturday, November 22d.—I went to take him my copy. "It is not large enough; you have not got enough confidence." I will do more next week—two of Rubens' heads copied by the father of Robert-Fleury, who was a great artist, and then a small painting by him, but original.

As I admired greatly the sketch he made for the ceiling of the Luxembourg (I mean Tony), he offered it to me in the most graceful way, saying that it was a great pleasure to him to give it to a connoisseur who possessed appreciation.

"But, Monsieur, there can be no lack of people who appreciate your work."

"Possibly; but it is not the same thing."

I am getting braver, and have almost lost my fear of him. After having seen him once or twice a week for two years at the studio, it seems funny actually to chat with him, and that he should help me on with my cloak. A little more and we shall be a pair of friends. If it were not for the portrait I should be happy, for my master is as good as possible to me.

Monday, November 24th.—We went to invite Julian to dinner, and he made twenty thousand excuses, saying that he would thereby lose all authority over me and there would be no way to get along; all the more that the least sign of politeness to me would seem like a shameless favoritism. They would say that we ask him to dinner, and that I can do what I like with him because I am rich. The good man is right, and it might lead to his treating me worse than I deserved. The Spaniard caused Breslau to be rude to me by continually saying that she was my maid.

Tuesday, November 25th.—The studio at No. 37 has been hired and is almost finished.

I passed the day there to-day; it is very large, with gray walls.

Digitized by Google

I carried there two shabby Gobelin tapestries, which cover the end wall, a Persian carpet, some Chinese mats, a large square Algerian divan, a dais for the model, a lot of odd pieces of different materials, and some large satinette draperies of a warm, undecided color.

I took over, too, a great many casts. The Venuses of Milo, of Medicis, and of Nîmes; the Apollo and the Faun of Naples, a cast of a body showing the muscles, several bas reliefs, etc., a portmanteau, a fountain, a mirror which cost 4 francs and 25 centimes, a 32-franc clock, a chair, a stove, a chest of drawers with the top arranged for a color-box, a full tea-set, an inkstand and a pen, a pail, a bucket, and a quantity of canvases, caricatures, studies, and sketches.

To-morrow I will unpack some drawings, but I fear they will make my painting look poor. I have also a flayed arm and a leg, life-size, a skeleton, and a box of carpenter's tools. I must get an Antinous.

Wednesday, December 25th.—We went to call on Père Didon at the Dominican Monastery. Need I tell you that Père Didon is the preacher whose fame has been daily growing for the last ten years and of whom, just now, all Paris is talking. He expected us. As soon as we arrived they went to tell him, and we waited in the reception-room, full of windows, with a table, three chairs, and a pretty little stove. I saw his portrait yesterday, so I knew that he had splendid eyes.

He was very amiable, very polite, very handsome in his beautiful gown of white wool, which reminded me of the dresses I used to wear. Without the tonsure his head would be of the same type as Cassagnac's, but more intelligent, and with more honest eyes; his attitude, too, is more natural though very dignified; his face is beginning to become heavy, and he has the same disagreeable distorted something about the mouth as Cassagnac; but very distinguished, without the *outré* charm of the creole, a dull complexion, a fine forehead, the head well carried; adorably white and beautiful hands, and

Digitized by Google

a manner which is cheerful and full of good humor. I would like to see him with a mustache.

Plenty of wit in spite of a great deal of assurance. It is easy to see that he knows the extent of his celebrity, that he is accustomed to be worshiped, and that he is sincerely happy over his renown. Mère M— naturally warned him of the wonder he would see, and we spoke about making his portrait.

He did not refuse; but said it would be difficult, almost impossible for a young girl to paint the portrait of Père Didon. He is so much sought after, and so much is said about him.

But that is precisely why I wish to do it, idiot!

I was introduced as a fervent admirer. This was the first time I had ever seen him, but he is just what I had fancied him to be, with his inflections of voice passing from the most caressing tones to outbursts which are almost terrifying, even in simple conversation.

He promised to come and see us, and, for a moment, I was satisfied with that; but it was stupid and false. What I wish now is, for him to be willing to pose. There is nothing in the world that would suit so admirably my rôle of ambitious artist.

Thursday, December 26th.—We went for a sleigh-ride with Madame G—.

The evening ended in a farce; the princess, Alexis, and Blanc went off to the Varieties, and we (Dina, the Count de Toulouse, and I) extracted a champagne supper from the side-board, and having supped, we arranged four places about the table. I poured water with some white wine into the empty champagne bottle which I carefully recorked, and played a similar trick with the *foie gras*. They will all come back to supper.

I wish them a good appetite!

Sunday, December 14th.—Berthe came to fetch me, and with Bojidar we went off on foot to explore the Latin Quarter, Place Saint Sulpice, Rue Mouffetard, Rue de Nevers, the Morgue, Rue des Anglais, etc.

Digitized by Google

We rode in a street car for a quarter of an hour, then walked again, and kept it up from 3 to 7. There is nothing more adorable than old Paris; it recalls Rome, and Dumas' novels, and "Notre Dame de Paris," with Quasimodo, and a heap of charming ancient things.

We bought chestnuts at a street corner, and then passed twenty minutes in one old shoe-shop, where we spent nearly 9 francs, and in another, where they were almost rude to us because I bargained with them. "How, Madame, you haggle about 7 francs, and you would not hesitate about paying 200 for a fur cloak!"—the one I had on, by the way, was worth 2,000.

In turning a corner, as our shoes made no noise, we let Bojidar pass on, and hid in a doorway; but he soon found us, and we went to two express companies to order two large wagons with four horses to carry Monsieur A—'s furniture. Berthe quietly gave particulars: Two grand pianos, a bath, side-boards with double mirrors, crockery, a billiard table, etc. Afterward, we wanted to go in everywhere, and be saucy to everybody; but it was 7 o'clock. We had to take a cab; but we were scarcely in, when the horse fell, and we got out again. They put the poor beast on his legs, and we started once more.

I have not spoken of a very innocent couple who were with us in the street car. We made them stare by telling all sorts of stories such as the one of the young girl, who, in a collision on a railroad, had such a severe shock that her knees were forced through her chest and came out through her back.

Sunday, December 28th.—Paul is going to be married. I give my consent. I will tell you why. She adores him, and wants to marry him very much. She is of tolerably good family, well known, of the same neighborhood, rich enough, pretty, and, to judge from her letters, has a pleasing character; and then, she wishes it. It may be that she is a little

Digitized by Google

more excited about it because Paul is the son of a marshal of the nobility and has fashionable relations in Paris. All the more reason why I should consent. Thanks to Rosalie's negligence, my letter to Paul never reached him. Mamma has agreed to it. The young lady sent this telegram:

"Delighted. Happy. Thanks to mamma on my knees. Come back soon. ALEXANDRINE."

They say that the poor little girl is afraid of the Parisian part of the family, and of me, so proud, haughty, and stern. But it is not I who will say no, though I have never loved as she loves. I would not have it on my conscience to cause chagrin to any one. It is easy to say that one is this or that, and that one is becoming bad; but when the opportunity presents itself to give pain to a fellow-being, I do not even think twice. If I suffer torture, shall I cure it by torturing others? It is from no innate goodness that I am good, but because if I were not, it would weigh on my conscience, and that would torment me. Truly, selfish people should do only good; evil-doing makes one too unhappy. Well, every one to his taste! Besides, Paul will never be anything but a gentleman farmer.

Wednesday, December 31st.—I think that I am going to be ill. I am so weak I could cry for nothing. We went to the Magasin du Louvre, when we came out of the studio. It needs Zola to describe this exasperating, busy, disgusting crowd, running, bustling, with nose ahead and wandering eyes. It made me feel nervous and faint. Mamma sent to the beautiful (heaven forgive me) Alexandrine Pachtenko a simple and appropriate letter; and this is what I wrote, on smooth, white paper, with a little *M* surmounted by a coronet in gold.

"Dear Mademoiselle:—My brother will bring you mamma's consent. I pray for your happiness, and hope that you will make our dear Paul as happy as he deserves to be. Looking forward to the pleasure of welcoming you among us, I embrace you cordially.

"MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF."

Digitized by Google

What else could I say? Paul, built like a Hercules, a handsome man, might make a better marriage; this is the one he chooses. I accept it for the young girl's sake.

What a sad ending of the year! I think I will go to bed at 11 so that I may be asleep at midnight, instead of tiring myself out in looking for good luck.

[END OF PART I.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

JOURNAL

OF

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

A. D. HALL.

THE ONLY COMPLETE ENGLISH EDITION.

PART II.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Journal of Marie Bashkirtseff.

1880.

Thursday, January 1st.—I have been to the studio this morning, so that, having worked on the first of the year, I shall work all the year. Afterward we paid some visits and went to the Bois.

Paul left this evening at 7. Mamma alone went with him to the train. Seeing people off saddens me. I let him go without more emotion than if he had gone for a walk, and if I had gone to the station I should certainly have shed tears.

Saturday, January 3d.—I cough continually; but, by a miracle, instead of it making me unsightly, it gives me an air of languor which suits me.

Monday, January 5th.—Well, things go badly! I have begun to work again, but as I did not have a complete rest I feel an intense languor and discouragement. And the *Salon* so near! I talked about it to Julian, the great, and we agree about it, more especially is this his opinion, that I am not ready.

Let us see; I have worked for two years and four months without deducting lost time and traveling. Not much; yet, in one sense, a great deal! I have not worked hard enough. I have lost time. I have relaxed my energies. I—in a word, I am not ready. "The pricks of a pin drive you mad," said Edmond, "but you can stand a heavy blow from a club." It is true. One eternal comparison—Breslau. She began in June, 1875. That gives her four and a half years, and two years at Zurich or Munich; total, six years and a half, not deducting travel or lost time, as I had to do. She had painted two years before

Digitized by Google

she exhibited. I have painted for a year and six months and I could not exhibit with as much honor as she gained.

As far as I am concerned, that would be nothing. I could wait. I am courageous, and if they tell me to wait a year, I answer sincerely: "It is well." But my public, my family; they will no longer believe in me! I might exhibit, but what Julian wants is that I should paint a sensational portrait, and I should do that poorly. This is what it is to get on a high horse. There are those in the studio five times less strong than I. They exhibited, and no notice was taken, that is true. But what shall I do? "You need neither lessons nor orders of 50 or 100 francs; you must make a sensation. It would be altogether unworthy to exhibit something like the others have done."

That is also my opinion; but my public, the family, and friends in Russia?

Do you know Julian says I draw ten times better than Manet, and then adds that I can not draw a bit; "*You* ought to do better!"

I am much annoyed and want to rid myself of the whole business.

Madame G— came to inquire for me, for, do you know, I am barking like a dog.

Saturday, January 17th.—The doctor says that my cough is purely nervous; he may be right, for I have caught no cold. I have no sore throat, no pain in my chest. I simply strangle and feel a pain in my right side. However, I go to my room at 11, and, though I am hoping to fall sick, so that I shall not be obliged to go to the ball, I dress. I am beautiful.

Tuesday, January 20th.—On returning from the studio I learned that Madame G— had been here expecting to find me in my room, and she was furious because I do not take care of myself as old people do. And then, the tickets promised for to-morrow were given to Madame de Rothschild.

I would readily give 10,000 francs for a perpetual card of

Digitized by Google

admission. It would be such a relief not to have to ask for tickets, to be independent.

Barren aspirations, barren and miserable intrigues, barren discussions with my family, barren evenings passed in talking of what I would like, without making a single step toward accomplishing it, barren and miserable efforts!

Saturday, January 31st.—To-night, Saturday, we went to the concert and ball given under the patronage of Queen Isabella, for the benefit of those who suffered by the inundations in Murcia. The Queen was present at the concert, and afterward came into the ball-room and stayed an hour.

I do not altogether like dancing. It is not amusing to feel one's self in the arms of a man. In short it is a matter of indifference to me, for I have never understood those troubles caused by waltzing, of which novels speak.

In dancing, I only think of the lookers-on.

Thursday, February 5th.—I would like to do every day as I have done to-day; work from 8 to 12, and from 2 to 5. At 5 they brought the lamp, and I drew until half-past 7.

From 7 to 8, dressing; at 8, dinner; reading and sleep, till 11.

Still, to work from 2 to half-past 7 without stopping is, perhaps, too fatiguing.

Tuesday, February 10th.—I have had a long conversation with Father Julian about my *Salon* picture. I submitted two ideas, of which he approves. I will draw both; it will take three days, and then we will choose. I am not strong enough to make a brilliant success of a man's portrait—a thankless task—but I have the strength to execute a figure life-size and nude, the thing which is the goal, says Julian, of all who feel they have talent. This man amuses me; he pictures a great future for me; he will make me do this and that, if only I will be "wise," and since our last talk, I am "wise." Next year I will paint a portrait of some celebrated man—and a picture. "I want you to rise from the ranks all at once."

Digitized by Google

For this year, I, the lucky one, have selected this: A woman sitting at a table, her chin resting on her hand, and her elbow on the table. She is reading a book, a blaze of light on beautiful blonde hair. Title: "The Question of Divorce," by Dumas. This book is just out, and the question is exciting everybody. The other picture is simply Dina in a white china crape skirt, sitting in a large, old-fashioned chair, her arms hanging down with interlocked fingers. A very simple pose, but so graceful that I hastened to sketch it one evening when, quite by chance, she had thrown herself into the attitude. It is somewhat in the style of Récamier, and to prevent the chemise looking immodest I shall add a colored sash. In this second idea, what tempts me is the complete simplicity and the fine bits of painting. Oh, it will be truly delicious!

To-day I am in the seventh heaven. I feel myself altogether superior, great, happy, and capable. I believe in a future. In short, all is well.

Monday, February 16th.—We have been to visit the Queen, who was very kind.

I am continually looking for a heap of things for my picture.

This evening at the Français, the first performance of Sardou's "Daniel Rochat." Quite an event. We had an excellent box with six seats. The audience was superb—all society and the members of the government.

As to the piece, I must see it again, but it seems to me that there are tiresome parts. There is quite a Swiss atmosphere about it. But there was so much noise, applause, hissing, approval, and protest, that one could only hear the half of what the actors said. The hero is a great orator, a sort of atheistic Gambetta; the heroine a young girl, an Anglo-American, Protestant, very liberal and a Republican, but a believer.

You can imagine how much can be made of such a subject at the present time.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, February 25th.—While running after models at Léonie's I have made the acquaintance of almost the entire Baudouin family. It is Zola pure and simple, the Zola of Nana; that is the name I give Léonie. A mixture of simplicity and astonishing perversity.

At present she does not pose. "I posed when I did not know what I was doing. It is not proper to pose. I am at a dressmaker's. It is not amusing, but he wishes it." "Who is he?" "My friend, for I live with a gentleman."

And her sister tells me that she is crazy about him, especially since he has taken to beating her.

Sunday, February 29th.—Julian came to see my picture. He is very pleased with it, and has spoken to Tony, who will come also; he is very, very busy, but he will come with pleasure when I let him know.

Wednesday, March 3d.—From this time I shall have to stop going out evenings, to be able to rise without fatigue and work from 8 o'clock.

I have only sixteen days left.

Friday, March 17th.—Julian came again to see my picture. He finds the plush-covered table, the book, and the flowers, very good. "The rest will come; the whole thing has *go;* it is striking." I, who wept this morning, came home at 6, consoled and happy, and I find mamma in tears, with two telegrams, one from my father.

If mamma leaves to-morrow, Dina will go with her. I have only a week. I shall never be able to find a model; and even if I found one to-morrow, I should have only six days, and it is not possible; so I have lost all, and I will not hide from you that I weep from disappointment, and also because nothing succeeds with me. I get an idea—a sensational subject, which must have an effect in spite of the imperfection of execution, and which would give me at once what I might not be able to have otherwise in a year's time; and now all is at an end. Everything falls to pieces. The work is only half

Digitized by Google

done, and it must be abandoned. This is, indeed, misfortune. Think of me what you will, but Paul's romantic troubles make no impression upon me, and my own disappointment fills me with despair and exasperation. I do not see how I can explain it. There is another motive for it than egotism; and even should it be egotism, surely, I am unhappy enough —forlorn enough to excuse my being selfish.

Then all the dreams for this year vanish. I must wait a whole year longer. Do you think that seems little? I suffer so much every day. I hoped to find consolation in my painting, and you see how it all turns out.

And my poor painting is sacrificed; my ambitions disappointed; the pleasure I might have had, lost or postponed. Can any of these things console or save Paul and his *fiancée* away yonder?

Useless sacrifices and misfortunes are triply painful.

Now all is upset and spoiled; but for them, all will come right; they will be married. A month sooner or later matters nothing. Perhaps delay will be best for both of them. Whilst for me it is necessary to move quickly. Eight days lost will put me back a whole year. But, after all, what can I expect? It is absurd, perhaps, but I am desperate enough to weep over it, as much as I did for the Prince Imperial. They will think that my eyes are red for Paul; the simpletons!

Each person has his own interests to look after. His are his betrothed, love, his little farm, and Poltava. For me it is quite another thing—another thing, which seems to embrace everything I desire or lack; every human joy; all happiness; compensation for all my suffering. I must wait another year, when for me, more than anyone else in the world, life is a race against disease.

Monday, March 15th.—It was all much ado about nothing. All is arranged. On Saturday, came reassuring telegrams. Nothing serious has happened.

Digitized by Google

I have written to Tony to come, but I am terribly afraid. I fear so much what Tony will say. It seems to me so presumptuous to exhibit, although Julian said that if all the exhibitors had my strength of handling, it would be a very fortunate thing. It seems to me that I shall be overwhelmed with shame when he comes to see the picture. I am not sure that I shall dare—and yet, I can not go away if he comes. It is incredible that I should say that, for if I said it aloud they would think that I was joking.

Friday, March 19th.—At a quarter before 12, Tony came. Why did I not begin sooner? It is very pretty; it is charming. What a pity, etc. In a word, he is reassuring, but I must ask for an extension of time.

It might be sent as it is, but it is not worth while. "That is my private, sincere opinion. Ask for an extension and you will do something really good." Then he rolled up his sleeves, took the palette and put in a few dashes here and there to show me where light was wanted. But I will retouch it all, if I get the extension. He stayed more than two hours. He is a pleasant fellow. I felt amused and was in such a good temper that I cared little what became of the picture. Really, those few touches of his are an excellent lesson. At 2, I took Dina with me and we went to the Chamber of Deputies. I inquired for Monsieur Andrieux (to approve of my petition to Monsieur Turquet, the under-secretary of the Beaux Arts). After waiting an hour in vain, we went to the prefecture of police, but he was not there; then I carried a letter to Doctor X—, in which I explained what I wanted. Returning home, I found that the prefect of police had called to place himself at our disposal, and that Julian was in 37 with mamma. Julian was carried away with the picture—"You are quite man-like; nothing astonishes me in you." He said all these fine things before Madame Simonides, who had come to see the picture, and before Rosalie, too, before I came in.

Digitized by Google

I was already delighted and full of joy before even I knew the result of the steps taken by my mother, who had written to Turquet. I have it, I have my extension of six days! I am not sure whom I ought to thank; but this evening I am going to the opera with the Gavinis. I shall thank Monsieur Gavini; I believe that I owe it to him. I am radiant, triumphant, and happy!

But to return to my painting. Julian is raving about it. Tony also declared that it is good in tone, harmonious, pretty, energetic; and Julian adds that it is seductive, and that the Swedish colorists of the studios are idiots to think that successful coloring lies in a process.

"Here is a naturalist who has done an agreeable thing—not agreeable in the softer sense of the word—a truly seductive thing."

I shall finish it, then.

A grand day!

Saturday, March 20th.—I went out to get through the formalities of tickets, etc. At the *Salon* there was quite a crowd of people and pictures, and drays and artists. I went to the Under-Secretary of State to get my ticket signed, the extension being granted to Mademoiselle Bashkirtseff and my picture being signed Russ. Turquet was very polite. He said that he had heard of my picture, and after that I can not remember all the errands I did.

Sunday, March 21st.—Saint-Marceaux was here to give me advice. He is pleasing, but made me rather uncomfortable. He has an absent manner, walks quickly, and speaks quickly—a bundle of nerves. I am like that myself; but all the same he makes me uncomfortable, although he only spoke well of the picture. But the difficulty is, when people say nothing I am unhappy, and when they praise me it seems to me they are treating me like a little girl and are laughing at me. But this evening I am not so cheerful as yesterday, because the right arm is too long. It is two centimeters too long, and

Digitized by Google

I—I the correct draughtsman—am humiliated before a sculptor like Monsieur Saint-Marceaux.

Monday, March 22d.—Tony is astonished that I have done so much in so short a time.

"For, really, it is the first time you have made any application of your studies."

That is so.

"Well, it is not at all bad, do you know."

He took off his overcoat, seized a palette, and painted me a hand—the lower one—in his peculiar whitish tone.

(He touched the hair, and I have entirely repainted it. I did the same for the hand.) Then he worked a little on the hand, and we talked.

After all, leaving out the background, the hair, and the plush, it is wretched painting. I can do better—that is Tony's opinion, also; but he is nevertheless content, and says that if there were any chance of its being refused at the *Salon* he would be the first to tell me not to send it. He says he is astonished to see what I have done. It is well-conceived, well-arranged, harmonious, elegant, and graceful.

Oh, yes; yes, indeed. I am very displeased with the flesh. When I think that they will say it is my style! I am obliged to have recourse to glazing, I who delight in painting frankly and simply! I assure you that it distresses me to exhibit something the execution of which I am dissatisfied with—something which is so different from my usual work. It is true I have never done anything which has satisfied me; but this is wretched, it is all patched up. Tony says that this time Breslau shows the influence of Bastien-Lepage. She feels my influence as I feel hers. Tony is as kind as possible. And they say I might have done better! Accursed modesty! Wretched lack of confidence! If I had not allowed myself to tremble and to ask myself: To be or not to be? But I will not commit myself to the absurdity of bewailing an accomplished fact.

Digitized by Google

Why should I think of Italy to-night? That is a burning thought which I always seek to avoid. I have stopped my Roman readings, they excited me too much, and I have fallen back on the French Revolution and Greece. But Rome! Italy! when I think of that sun, that atmosphere, of all their beauties, I become insane!

Even Naples—oh, Naples at night! And what is curious is that there is no man in the case. When I think that I might be there I become insane. So much do I feel this, that even the scenery in "The Dumb Girl" causes me a sort of emotion.

Wednesday, March 24th.—Tony came, but found no fault with my painting. When 6 o'clock came we were still chatting.

"There will certainly be in the *Salon*" said Tony, "things twenty times inferior to yours, but, nevertheless, there is no absolute certainty of your picture being accepted, for the poor committee examines 600 a day, and they frequently refuse in disgust what they have looked at in a bad temper; but you have in your favor that your picture is striking, and is of a generally agreeable tone. And then, too, Lefebvre, Laurens, and Bonnat are great friends of mine."

What a good fellow is Tony! and I like him all the more that I do not believe he is happy. The authority of his father's name and his own growing talent gave him the medal of honor in 1870. Then little by little all is forgotten, all is effaced, and there arises an enemy who, having influence with Albert Wolf of the *Figaro*, causes this journalist to become hostile. In addition, he does not sound his own trumpet, and while men like Cot make large portraits at high prices, he makes little ones which bring money, but no satisfaction.

That good Tony has showered sober, but discriminating encouragement on me. I can, if I wish, make a very fine painter, and by that you understand, he does not mean as mamma does, the sort of painter I am now, but such a painter

Digitized by Google

as himself, Bonnat, Carolus, Bastien, etc. I must make serious studies, paint torsos at home to prepare myself to paint pictures. I must think of nothing but painting; give myself up to it altogether. I have an admirable organization. Of the women, there are only Breslau and myself who can paint the nude. Few artists draw an academy sketch as she or I do. To sum up, it is astonishing what I have done in eighteen days, after two years of study. I must not stop there; these minor triumphs are nothing.

Robert-Fleury says that I must look further, be more earnest. I can rise as high as I please. Genius is not acquired, but to gain real knowledge one must work, and above all, not believe in the compliments that are paid; he himself speaks only the truth.

"But, Monsieur, if you said anything else, I should be inconsolable."

"Go ahead, work, apply yourself, and you may become whatever you desire to be."

Thursday, March 25th.—I am giving the last touches to the picture; but I can work no longer, for there is no more to do, unless I should do it all over again. It looks as if it had been finished in a hurry.

The young woman is sitting before a table covered with an old green plush cover of a very rich tone, and, resting on her right hand, with her elbow on the table, is reading a book beside which lies a bunch of violets. The white of the book, the tone of the plush, and the flowers beside the arm form a happy contrast. The woman is in *déshabille* of very light-blue damask, with a neckerchief of muslin and old lace. Her left hand lies naturally in her lap, and holds a paper-knife.

The chair is in deep plush, and the background is an otter-skin. The background and the table are very good. It is a three-quarter face. Dina's adorable hair, golden blonde, is loose; the shape of the head is clearly outlined, and the slightly disheveled hair falls over her back.

Digitized by Google

At half-past 3, Monsieur and Madame Gavini came. "We thought it would be impossible to let Marie's picture leave without seeing it. It is the departure of a first child." What good people they are. Gavini went to the *Palais de l'Industrie* in the carriage, and two men carried the picture. It all made me feel hot, cold, and afraid, like a funeral.

And then the great halls, the sanded sculpture-hall, the stairs, all made my heart beat. While they were getting my receipt and my number, Bonnat's portrait of Monsieur Grévy came in, but it was placed against a wall, and the light prevented me from seeing it. In the whole hall there are only Bonnat, I, and a frightful yellow background. The Bonnat seemed to me to be good, and I was quite astonished to find myself there.

It is my first début, an independent and public act. I feel myself alone on a height surrounded by water. At last it is done; my number is 9,091. Mademoiselle Marie Constantin Russ. I hope it will be accepted. I have sent the number to Tony.

Friday, March 26th.—We confessed before taking communion to-day.

One priest confesses like an angel, that is, he is an intelligent man, a few words and it is finished; you know my ideas on the subject. I should have died of despair long ago, but for my belief in God; but, on the other hand, in formulas and traditions I have little faith.

Wednesday, March 31st.—I am out of sorts. I should have listened to Tony and taken some rest. I annoyed Julian by sending him the following note:

"I, the undersigned, promise every week to complete a head and an academy sketch, or a life-size study, but properly painted. If I fail of the above conditions, I authorize M. Rodolphe Julian, painter, to proclaim everywhere that I am absolutely unworthy of every sort of interest. MARIE RUSS."

Then I went to Tony; but he had a model, and I only stayed a few minutes.

Digitized by Google

"You have great gifts," said Tony; "you must really achieve something great!"

"If you are idle, I answer for nothing," said Julian; "you are already behind; as to succeeding, you will succeed anyhow after a fashion, but you must have phenomenal success. You must absolutely make a great effort for the next *Salon*. You ought to make a picture that shall amount to something; you must do so!"

Wednesday, April 7th.—I must not forget that Julian announced to me, this morning, that my picture is accepted. Curious, I feel no satisfaction. Mamma's joy annoys me. Such a success is not worthy of me.

Saturday, April 10th.—I am not happy about my exhibit. There are four admission numbers. Breslau had a three. I have simply been admitted without number. If Breslau has only had three, it is right that I should have nothing. Ah, well! It will turn out all right. I have been neither complimented nor scolded about my head. It is not worthy of me. I must improve. I must! I must! I am ashamed to have exhibited this thing. It is rather pretty, but not worthy of me.

Saturday, April 17th.—I was a full hour with Tony this afternoon. I made the acquaintance of his father, who was very amiable, and who said that he drew for four years before he painted. His father gone, we talked, and I smoked a cigarette. As to the painting I had brought, he said it was good, and told me to go on. Julian also said that, except my *Salon* picture, it is the greatest effort I have made.

Thursday, April 22d.—I suppose my picture will be badly hung and unnoticed, or else very prominent, and then it will bring me unpleasantness. They will say that it is only noisily pretentious, or conspicuously weak; how can I tell?

Monday, April 26th.—I have no place in the studio. A charming American is going to pose for me, on condition that I give her the result.

Digitized by Google

Her little figure enchants me, and it will be almost a good picture. I dream of an exquisite arrangement, and the darling is polite enough to say that she will pose, and will be content with a little portrait, which I can do hereafter.

If my picture had not been received in the *Salon*, the students would never have confidence enough to pose for me.

Julian thinks that Tony worked on my picture, and you know how much Tony did. It was in too low a key, and he put in some touches, after which I conscientiously repainted the whole. As to the hand, he did draw it over, but the day before the last, I shortened the fingers, which made me do it all over again. So there is not even any of his drawing; he only showed me how I ought to do it. As a matter of fact, I did it honestly, and it is not very good, even now.

This evening we went to the P—'s, people in the law, I think. They praised the Hôtel d'Alcantara, which has the long and narrow gallery looking over the Champs Elysées by a single window. The hotel is curiously laid out, thanks to the long strip of ground which runs to the Champs Elysées, and is convenient for parties, although the gallery is very narrow. Decent, amiable people, but the society was peculiar, toilets of another century, and no one of any note. And my dear mother rose to present me to the Chilian or Mexican "who laughs;" he has a frightful grimace, which made him appear to laugh in a sinister way continually. And with it all he has a large, round face. He is said to have twenty-seven millions, and mamma thinks that— Marry this man; a man almost without a nose? Horror! I would accept a plain man, an old man—they are all the same for me; but a monster, never! What would be the use of millions with this ridiculous creature? There were many acquaintances, but it was enough to put one asleep—amateurs who made you gnash your teeth with their music; a violinist to whom no one listened, and a good-looking man who sang the "Schubert's Serenade," after having thrown all around glances of victory, with one hand resting on the

Digitized by Google

piano in a ridiculous attitude. I can not understand how a gentleman can make a clown of himself in a large party.

The ladies, with their heads covered with that blonde powder which looks so dirty on the hair, seemed to have wigs of wadding, or to have rolled in straw. How ugly! how stupid!

Tuesday, April 27th.—I almost ran to-day, as I was impatient to have my first sitting with the American. She is like Madame Récamier. I turned back her hair like Psyche's and drew her in a muslin chemise with short, puffed sleeves, a rose-colored ribbon below the breast, and a straw-colored scarf covering her arms.

She is astonishingly slim for eighteen; as slight as if she were fifteen, of a radiant complexion, and with very white hands.

Thursday, April 29th.—This evening we dined with the Simonides household. All is extraordinary in their house. I knew the wife at Julian's. The husband is good-looking and young; the wife is beautiful and more than thirty-five. They are very united, live quietly, see only a few artists, and execute extraordinary drawings and paintings, a sort of imitation renaissance. Subjects astonishing for their *naïveté*: "The Death of Beatrice," "The Death of Laura" (the woman who concealed her lover's head in a pot, from which grew flowers), and all in the manner of centuries ago. Madame dresses in the style of the time of Boccaccio. To-night she wore a gown of white Japanese crape of adorable softness, long and tight sleeves, like those of the Virgin, with other sleeves knotted behind; the gown simple and untrimmed; a waistband of ancient silver embroidery, which made her seem short; a bunch of pinks on her breast; pearls round her neck, and earrings and bracelets of old jewelry. With her pale complexion, her black and curly hair, and her gazelle eyes she seemed a fantastic spectre. She would be quite remarkable if she had only the sense to dress her hair simply, instead of wearing it like a hugh mop which gives her a Medusa's head.

Digitized by Google

We had returned to the studio for a quarter of an hour on leaving the dining-room, where we had had a very good dinner, with flowers and fruit artistically arranged, and I was accompanying Madame, who sang ancient classic Italian songs, when mamma came to take us to church. It is Passion week; but we arrived too late and I said my prayers at home.

To-morrow is varnishing day. I will take the little American because she has posed so well.

Friday, April 30th.—My American, whose name is Alice B—, came at 10, and we set off together. I desired to go almost alone to see first where my picture is placed. So, on my way to the *Salon*, I was in a great state of fear, and fancying the most dreadful things, so that they might not happen. It was all wasted; my picture is not yet hung. I found it at last, about noon, amid a thousand others, also unhung, but it was in the outer gallery where I had been already shocked to find Breslau placed. You know how Wolff treats the gallery; but still there are works of Renoir there, and other well-known artists. A—exhibits a large and good portrait of Léon Say, not at all bad, very striking; but the hands look as if they had been done by Robert-Fleury, the father. May I be pardoned the suggestion, if it is not true. The fact is that Léon Say, having posed only for the head, it was easy to use assistance. The portrait is very well hung. As for Breslau, hung like me in the gallery and near the ceiling, she has done a poor piece of painting, or, at least, a thing exceedingly unpleasant to look at. It is Mgr. Viard's portrait. I believe that what ruined her was that she tried too much for delicacy of tone. All is gray. The background, which is like grayish wood in panels, the decorations of chapels and oratories, the chair, all are muddy; the head also is very muddy.

But there are heads like that; by a different treatment, it would have been possible to make more of it. It must be admitted that there is good drawing and some breadth in the

Digitized by Google

work on the hands. The other students are not worth the trouble of being looked at.

As to Bastien-Lepage, the first thing that strikes one is an effect of space, of open air—Joan of Arc (the real Joan of Arc, the peasant girl), resting against an apple tree, with one branch in her left hand, which, as well as the arm, is perfection. The right arm hangs by her side; it is an admirable piece of work. Her head thrown back, neck stretched, and eyes which look at nothing—clear, wonderful eyes. The head has a startling effect; it is the peasant, the daughter of the field, entranced, suffering from her vision. The fruit garden which surrounds the house in the background is nature itself, but there is something which is wrong. The perspective does not appear to be good; it seems to crowd forward and hurts the figure.

The figure is sublime, and caused me so strong an emotion that, even as I write of it, I can scarcely restrain my tears.

Tony's ceiling was very graceful, very good, and pleased me.

These are the principal things for me. After dinner, I thought we were to visit the *Salon* as a family party; but no, my aunt was going to church, and mamma wanted to go, too, and it was only when they noticed how astonished and hurt I was that they decided to come, though unwillingly. I do not know if it is the modest place I have attained which enrages them, but that is no reason, and it is very hard for me to have such relations. Finally, ashamed of her indifference, or for some feeling I can not name, mamma came, and we three, she, Dina, and I, met first all the people of the studios, then acquaintances, and then Julian.

Saturday, May 1st.—I have just had fearful, stupid, and useless bad luck. To-morrow is Easter. This evening—or, rather, at night—we went to high mass, where were gathered the whole Roman colony, headed by all the members of the embassy. Elegance, beauty, and vanity all were represented.

Digitized by Google

It was a great review of Russian ladies and dresses, and everybody gossiped like magpies.

Well, at the last moment, they brought me a new dress, which looked exactly like a clumsy bundle of old dirty gauze. In spite of this I went; but no one can ever know what rage it cost me. My figure was hidden in a badly made and crooked corsage; my arms spoiled by sleeves that were stupidly too large; in a word, a pretentious piece of work, and to make matters worse, the gauze—which I had seen only by day-light—at night looked actually dirty.

What efforts it cost me not to tear it into ribbons and escape from the church! To be ill-dressed because you can not help it, is excusable; but to be able to be well-dressed and to show one's self such a monstrosity as I was to-night, is something horrible! Naturally, my hair showed my temper, it got out of order and my face burned. It was disgraceful.

This morning I went to the *Salon* to see Julian's young man, and he promised to do the impossible. I was in black stuff, very simply made, but my fresh-looking face attracted much attention.

And to-night! In the name of anything that you will, was it not a shame?

Thursday, May 6th.—Great compliments from Julian on my painting.

Friday, May 7th.—Madame Gavini came to-day to tell mamma that I fatigue myself too much. It is true; but it is not by work; not to be fatigued, I ought to go to bed at 10 or 11, and I sit up till 1, and wake at 7.

Yesterday that idiot S— was the reason of it. I was writing and he came to speak to me; then he went to play cards with my aunt, and I waited up for him only to hear some foolish words bordering on love. He said "Good-night" twenty times, and twenty times I said to him "Go," and twenty times he begged permission to kiss my hand. I laughed, and finally I said: "Well, then kiss it, it is all the

Digitized by Google

same to me." Then he kissed my hand and I am pained to confess that it gave me pleasure, not on account of the object, but there were—many things, and one is a woman after all.

This morning I still feel his kiss on my hand, for it was not the common kiss of politeness.

Oh, young girls!

Do you think I love this youth with large nostrils? No, indeed. Well, the affair with A— was the same thing. I made every effort to fall in love, and, with the help of the cardinals and the Pope, I excited myself; but not with true love. Alas, no. Well, since I am more than fifteen, and less stupid, I need invent nothing and the position becomes normal.

The kiss on my hand displeased me; especially because it gave me pleasure. I do not wish to be so much like a woman, so I promise to myself to be very cold to S—; but he is such a good fellow, so simple that I shall be stupid enough to play some comedy. It really is not worth while, I had better treat him like Alexis B—. That is what I shall do. Dina, he, and I stayed till 11, Dina listening and S— and I reading verses and translating from the Latin. I was astonished to see how well educated he is—at least, much better educated than I. I have forgotten a great deal and he remembers very well all that he learned at school and college. I never thought he was so well educated. I would like to make a friend of him—No, he does not please me enough for that, but a sort of intimate acquaintance.

Saturday, May 8th.—When people speak softly, I can not hear them! This morning Tony asked me if I had seen anything by Perugino, and I said "no," without understanding.

And when they told me of it afterward, I got out of it pretty badly by saying that in fact, I had never seen anything, and that it was better to confess ignorance.

Tony was pleased with my head. Breslau asked permission to paint my model; I generously consented, and offered to the

Digitized by Google

gaping studio the touching spectacle of we two, sitting friendly side by side. What children they are! I laugh at all of it!

Tony says I have begun well, and have only to continue in the same way. It looks as if I am racing with Breslau, and I have beaten her up to now. (We begin again, the week after next, in earnest.)

That amuses all of them, and everybody wants to pose for me. I enraged that good Breslau by saying that my picture had found a purchaser at 1,500 francs, and that I am hung in the outside gallery. "It is sad," I continued, "but right, for my picture is not a good one. I am not ashamed to acknowledge it. I have had only two years' instruction. It is the first picture I have ever exhibited, and I had only two weeks to do it in. The administration has been relatively right. They have hung only the worst things in the famous gallery. There is not a single decent canvas there."

Monday, May 10th.—What is pleasing is, that when I wish to act contrary to my impulses, I have never yet succeeded. I have never even tried to struggle. All is limited to a foregone resolution, and a line of conduct never followed. I do everything on the moment's inspiration, as it pleases me, and as it comes. Oh, diplomacy! or, rather, honestly, it is disagreeable to me not to follow the promptings of my nature, and I do follow them.

Thursday, May 13th.—I have such rumblings in the ears that I am obliged to make the greatest efforts to prevent people observing something amiss.

Oh, it is horrible! With S— I can get on, because I sit near him, and when I wish, I can tell him that he bores me. The G—'s speak loud at the studio. They laugh, and tell me I am becoming deaf. I pretend that I am absent-minded, and laugh it off; but it is horrible.

Sunday, May 16th.—I went alone to the *Salon* early. Only people who have cards were there. I had a long look at

Digitized by Google

"Joan of Arc," and, above all, at Morot's "Good Samaritan." I sat before the Morot, and examined it with a glass. It pleases me more than any picture I have ever seen. Nothing is superfluous. All is simple, true, appropriate. All is painted from nature, and nothing in it recalls the atrocious academic and conventional beauties. It is adorable to look at. Even the head of the ass is perfect: the landscape, the mantle, and the toe-nails. It is happily conceived, and correctly painted.

The "Joan of Arc" has a sublime head. These two canvases are in adjoining rooms. I went from one to the other. I looked at the Morot, and was thinking of my friend, S—, when he passed without seeing me, and when I went out I saw him from the garden, pointing out my picture to a person who looked like a journalist.

And Saint-Marceaux's "Harlequin!" When last year's *Salon* was closed, I thought that the medal of honor had affected me, the work being no longer there to reassure me. At the end of six months, I was sure that I had exaggerated Saint-Marceaux, but the "Harlequin" reopens my eyes. The first day I stood quietly before it, not imagining whose it was. Such a thankless subject, but such talent. It is more than talent. He is a true artist, so they do not say so much about him as about others—sculpture manufacturers. They are all manufacturers compared to Saint-Marceaux.

Tuesday, May 25th.—Madame Goup came for her portrait; then I drew a composition.

A subject has taken hold of me—Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, at the tomb of Christ. But, treated without conventionality, without *piety*, but as one thinks it really was.

Thursday, May 27th.—How beautiful it is in the morning! Attention! I begin—

First, I saluted the day, before the open window, with the harmonious sound of the harp, like the Priests of Apollo, and then thought of my two women at the sepulchre.

Digitized by Google

I should like to go to Jerusalem, and paint the picture there, in the open air, with the native heads.

Tuesday, June 1st.—I think that atheists must be very unhappy when they are afraid. When I am afraid, I at once call on God, and all my doubts disappear. It is a species of egotism—a wretched sentiment; but I endeavor not to claim virtues I do not possess. I find it is stupid enough to spread out all one's weaknesses and vileness. In 1873 I went to the Universal Exhibition of Vienna, in the worst of the cholera, under the protection of these verses of Psalm xci. I copy them exactly:

"He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

Yesterday I thought of those divine lines. I read them over with enthusiasm—with as much enthusiasm as in my childhood. I did not foresee how they would be of help to me to-day.

I have just made my will, it is placed in an envelope thus addressed: To M. Paul Bashkirtseff, Poltava; to be delivered into his own hands. Russia.

"I will come and compel you, when I am dead, if you do not carry out my wishes."

S— stayed; it began with a simple chat. My aunt would not leave; her presence annoyed me, and I played the piano. He told me what gave me a chill. His sisters want him to marry, but he does not like the wife they have selected for him.

"Then do not marry her; believe me, it would be madness."

Later, we played cards *aux bêtes*, one of the favorite games of Russian servants.

"You will marry Madame de B—," I wrote on a book.

"No, she is much too old," he answered in the same way.

Digitized by Google

Then we filled six pages with sentences it would be amusing to preserve.

It is quite clear that he loves me. He adores me, and his conversation hovers around the burning subject.

I forbade his joking, and he answered that it was I who was laughing at him. My aunt interrupted now and then, saying that it was time to go to bed, and I answered, that I was sick and going to die.

After this singular correspondence, I am almost convinced that he loves me. To-night, on his part, there were very significant looks and hand-pressing under pretense that I was feverish, and that he was feeling my pulse. It will never come to anything, but I should like all the same to keep this youth, not knowing yet what I should do with him. I will tell him to ask mamma; that will gain time. Mamma will refuse—another delay—and then I know not what. It is really something to know nothing.

Monday, June 14th.—I delight in reading over my past life, as I have been doing to-day.

I remember when C— entered. It was like a lightning flash. I can neither explain his manner nor my impressions. My whole being went out to him when I gave him my hand, and then I felt myself on wings, free from my carnal surroundings. And then I felt a fearful terror at seeing the hours pass so quickly! And I did not understand! It is a pity that the nature of these memoranda does not allow me to isolate remarkable facts. All is confused, and then—I have shown some affectation, to tell the truth, in discussing everything to prove that C— was not all the world to me. Only when I want to live the events over again, I am shocked to find them mixed up with the rest. But is it not so in life?

However, there are things, events, men whom one would separate and inclose in a precious casket with a golden key.

"When you feel yourself superior to him he will no longer dominate you," said Julian.

Digitized by Google

Perhaps it is the idea of having his portrait to paint which has made me work—who knows?

Wednesday, June 16th.—At 8 o'clock we went to the *Salon*, where I met Saint-Marceaux. We exchanged common-places, and I said to him, stupidly: "You never come to see us." "I am so busy." It was so silly of me to seem to reproach him, and now I am afraid that Saint-Marceaux will be annoyed at having met me. You see I must attain to something, and men like Saint-Marceaux must be made to see something in me. Attention! I have only a few months, now, in which to paint my picture for the *Salon*. And I might go to St. Petersburg and marry some one! No, I will remain here and work, and go there in the winter of 1881 and 1882. Besides, that will be time enough.

Yes, I will remain and work. Oh, yes! Oh, yes! You shall see that. It is an excellent decision, and to-morrow I will begin to devote myself entirely to the studio.

Friday, June 18th.—I have worked all day. My model is so graceful and pretty, that I have put off from day to day commencing to paint; the preliminary sketch was so good that I feared to spoil it; but, on the whole, I am satisfied with my progress to-day.

And in the evening S— came. I attributed his depression to his being in love, but it seems that there is something else; he is going to Bucharest or Lille, as director of his brother-in-law's bank. But above all, he wants to marry me. Ah! he still holds to that idea. I smiled, and told him that he was bold and presumptuous, and explained to him that I had no dowry, as my dowry would be only sufficient for pin-money, and that he would have to lodge me, feed me, and pay all my expenses. Poor fellow! I felt a little sorry for him all the same.

I do not think that he is overjoyed to go.

He kissed my hands a hundred times and begged me not to forget him. "You will think sometimes of me? Say, oh, I implore you, that you will think of me!"

Digitized by Google

"When I have time."

But he asked me so many times that I was forced at last to give him a very faint "yes." Ah, the farewells were tragic, on his side, at least! We were both near the door of the *salon*, and, to give him a pleasant memory of our parting, I gravely held out my hand for him to kiss, and then we shook hands. I remained a few moments in thought. I shall miss this boy. He will write to me, however.

For several days Paris has gone mad over little pigs. They are said to bring good luck, and are made of gold, enamel, jewels, everything. For the last two days I have worn a copper one. At the studio they say that it is due to this pig that I have made a good bit of painting. Well, that poor Casimir wears, in memory of me, a little pig.

I would like to give him the Gospel of St. Matthew, with this inscription: "The finest book in the world, and one which supplies every want of the soul. There is no need to be a sentimentalist or a bigot to find in it peace and consolation. Keep it as a talisman, and read a page every evening in memory of me, who have, perhaps, made you suffer some, and you will understand why it is the finest book in the world." But does he deserve it? Would it not be better for him to limit himself to the little pig? In the first place, he would not understand St. Matthew.

Sunday, June 20th.—I passed the morning at the *Salon*, which closes this evening. "The Good Samaritan" has received the medal of honor. But Morot's picture out of the question, the medal of honor should not be so easy of attainment. However, it is not given to merit, but to *the best work of the Salon.*

Bastien-Lepage's landscape is not perfect; it injures the figure; but what an exquisite figure! The head is absolutely unrivaled. Morot's picture almost wearied me to-day, while Bastien-Lepage—I went from one to the other, and then to a sleeping head by Henner, and a little nymph by the same

Digitized by Google

artist. Henner is charm itself. It is not exactly nature, but it ought to be nature, and it is adorable. His "Nymphs in Twilight" is incomparable and inimitable. He does not vary, but he is always charming. His nudities at the Luxembourg are not equal to what he does now. His picture in last year's *Salon* I like better than anything I have seen of his. I longed so to buy it, and I looked at it every day. Ah, if I were rich! S— shall not have his St. Matthew. It is singular the impression that the Morot has made upon me; it is vapid beside Bastien-Lepage and Henner. Henner! He has inexpressible charm.

Sunday, June 27th.—I modeled a little in the morning. I am as low as possible, but I must appear gay, and my misery makes me stupid. I do not know how to say anything; my laughter is forced; I listen to all sorts of common-places, and I would like to cry.

Misery of misery!

Outside of my art, which I began through ambition and fancy, continued through vanity, and adore now; outside of this passion (for it is a passion) I have nothing but the most atrocious of existences! Ah, misery of misery! There are, however, some happy people on earth. Happy, that is too much; a simply bearable existence would be enough for me. With what I have, that would be happiness.

Wednesday, June 30th.—Instead of painting, I took Miss Graham and we went to the Rue de Sèvres and passed an hour there before the houses of the Jesuits. But it was 9 o'clock and we saw only the remains of the agitation.

I think the proscription of the Jesuits stupid, and I can only explain it as a rascally revenge of Monsieur Jules Ferry, for his Article 7. The influence of the Jesuits has been considerably increased thereby; if one detests their doctrines, this is no way to stamp them out, and if it is difficult to stamp them out, it would be better to let them alone. There would be only one way to destroy the Jesuits, and that is imprac-

Digitized by Google

ticable. Give them all sorts of guarantees, make all sorts of advances to all the Jesuits in existence, make them gifts of lands, build them houses, create for them a city, and when they are all there, blow the whole thing up. I do not detest the Jesuits so much as I fear them, because I am so ignorant of what they *really* are. Is there any one who knows that?

No! but it would be difficult to do anything more stupid, and of less use than this proscription. Why did Gambetta permit it? I thought for a time that he allowed it to be arranged in order to intervene and prevent it.

Wednesday, July 14th.—The anniversary of the taking of the Bastile. A review, distribution of flags, illuminations, and dancing in all the public squares.

The marked characteristic of Paris is its charming novelty.

At 6 o'clock we took the belt railway for Porte Maillot. I was dressed in a pink gown, which cost 25 francs, at the Magasin du Printemps.

Notice that we were going to see the illuminations and uproar at Belleville. We talked and laughed so much that we passed the station and had to change trains three times. The most disquieting thing was, that all the villages seemed abandoned. Finally, we alighted in a barren place; it was 8 o'clock and we were beginning to be hungry. Gaillard proposed to dine at St. Fargeau Lake—beautiful trees, a lake, good cooking, etc. We agreed, set out to find it, and entered a park, the Buttes Chaumont. We were frightfully hungry, but we consoled ourselves at sight of the lovely landscape, and especially of a certain pavilion like a temple. Julian questioned everyone we met as to where there was a restaurant, and each one directed us a different way. Finally, after having walked a long way, and admired the pavement to console ourselves, we perceived a lake and an illuminated restaurant. Hurrah! We ran toward it, but, after running several minutes, we found a locked gate. We had to retrace our steps and go

Digitized by Google

round on the other side. It was too bad; the future Madame Gaillard was dying of hunger. And every time that we laughingly predicted some misadventure, it was sure to happen. The lake was not St. Fargeau, and the restaurant was a simple café, where there was nothing to eat.

"Let us go to Villette," said someone.

"If you want to eat something standing up," said a shabby citizen, "go in there," and he pointed to a miserable shanty.

Oh, joy! a cab hove in sight, but refused to take us, and it was only after much insisting and pleading that we prevailed upon the driver. We all five piled in and started for St. Fargeau Lake. I will not describe the drive, which lasted a whole hour through a lot of empty, narrow streets. We arrived at last. St. Fargeau Lake was not a lake at all, but an ugly pool of water. It was now half-past 9; but we were no sooner seated at table than it began to rain. There was a general movement to an enormous hall. I mounted upon a chair. "Gentlemen," I said, "I am an opportunist before everything, and as there is an opportunity to eat now, I propose that we do so without more ado." About 10 o'clock, we thought of the fireworks that we were to have seen from the top of the Buttes Chaumont. At the door of the restaurant we found our angelic coachman. He was drunk, but he showed the talent of an ambassador under difficult circumstances. In fact, cries of "Down with carriages!" were beginning to be heard; we answered with, "Long live the Republic!"

Friday, July 16th.—Julian thinks my painting very good, very good indeed; and A— is obliged to say that it is not bad, for Julian is more severe than Tony.

I am more than delighted at Julian's praises.

We are going away to-morrow, and I have been undergoing all the annoyances of packing.

It is fortunate that I am going away, for otherwise the studio would no longer go on so well. I am, just now, its unrivaled

Digitized by Google

head. I advise, I amuse, and they go into ecstasies over my work; I lay aside coquetry to be kind, gentle, obliging, to make myself liked, to like my comrades, and to comfort them with ices or fruit.

The other day I went out for awhile, and they immediately began to speak well of me. Mademoiselle Marie D— has not yet ceased telling about it, and Madeleine, who draws, as you know, wants to begin to paint, and has come to me for advice. It is true that I can teach admirably; if I painted as well as I teach, I should be contented. Julian regrets that I can not go on with that head, which would be "a thing to be exhibited." "It is so natural, so free, so living."

It is an original head—very large eyes, heavy lids, arched eyebrows, a little uplifted, a turned-up nose, a pretty mouth, a charming complexion; it is a young face, but with a look of past suffering, which, however, is not displeasing. Golden hair, arranged in a heavy mass, and relieved by the background of dark green.

Saturday, July 17th.—I would like to go into the country, the real country where there is no one; it would be happiness to be able to retire from time to time to uninhabited countries, to islands amid great odd trees, as in Paul and Virginia. To see the sun rise, and to enjoy the night all alone; in the most absolute peace and quiet. A wild country with great trees, a pure sky, mountains gilded by the sun, and an air such as we can imagine, an air which, in itself, is felicity, instead of the horrors one breathes here. But, for such an existence, money is necessary. And I would not want even the man I loved in that solitude.

Mont Dore, Tuesday, July 20th.—I went to Julian's, with Villevieille, in search of my keys that I left there yesterday. He encouraged me much, and I came away feeling happy. There is one other comfort, also, and that is that I am no longer afraid of Breslau.

"When she works," said Julian, speaking of me, "it is not

Digitized by Google

painting, it is nature itself; and even when she does not entirely succeed, you can see what she was aiming at."

After this call, we went to see the "*Prix de Rome.*" At 4 o'clock Villevieille returned to bid me good-bye, and we started. Monday, at 6 o'clock in the morning, we arrived at Clermont; there were six hours in a stage from Clermont to this frightful Mont Dore; but I preferred it to the railway.

We are badly lodged, the house is full, and the cooking atrocious. It was not until to-day that I had felt in the least comfortable, and that is because I have discovered some interesting subjects to paint.

Wednesday, July 21st.—I have begun my course of treatment. They come for me with an air-tight sedan chair. My costume is of white flannel, trousers to my feet, a cloak and a hood.

Then follow a bath, a *douche*, drinking the waters and inhalations. I agree to everything; but this is the last time that I will submit to treatment, and I would not do it now if I were not afraid of becoming deaf. My deafness is much better; almost well, in fact.

Thursday, July 22d.—I have no objection to the elevation of a man to supreme power, when that man is a hero like Napoleon I. I do not object to having a sort of dictatorship conferred upon a superior and capable being, but his children should not succeed him. I would not like even a life tenure of office; but, if a man does his duty, let him be retained.

I am wearing a peasant's hat here; it is very becoming to me and makes me look like one of Greuze's pictures. I sent a telegram and they forwarded me some linen dresses to wear warm days, and now it is cold. I am beginning to admire the country about here; until this evening, I was dulled by the wretchedness of the food—dulled because eating is an ignoble occupation, but one which we are forced to accept.

Friday, July 23d.—Who will give me back my squandered, stolen, vanished youth? I am not yet twenty, and the other

Digitized by Google

day I discovered three white hairs. I am proud of them, for they are a terrible proof that I have exaggerated nothing. Were it not for my young figure, I should appear old. Is that natural at my age?

No! there arises such a storm in my heart that I will cut the whole matter short by telling myself that I can always put a bullet through my head before pitying glances are cast at me.

I had an extraordinary voice; it was a gift from God, and I have lost it. Song for woman is what eloquence is for man—a power without limit.

I saw to-day Madame de Rothschild with her horses, dogs, etc., in the park, which my window overlooks. The sight of that happy woman made me ill; but I must be brave. Besides, when suffering becomes too severe, deliverance is at hand. When it has reached a certain point we know that it must henceforth diminish. It is while awaiting this crisis of the heart and soul that we suffer; but the crisis once reached, we are relieved. Then we call to our aid Epictetus, or we pray; but prayer is too emotional.

I am better for some days, perhaps, but during those days bitterness mounts, mounts, mounts again; then, there is another outburst, another abasement, and so all over again.

Tuesday, July 27th.—I tried to paint a landscape, but it ended in my knocking down the canvas; then I found beside me a little girl of four years, who was watching what I was doing, and instead of looking at the landscape, I looked at the child, who is going to pose for me to-morrow. How can anything be preferred to the human figure?

I have such a pain in my neck and left ear that it is driving me almost mad. I don't say anything about it, because it would only make my aunt worry me, and I know it comes from my throat trouble.

Here I have been for more than twenty-four hours suffering agony. It is impossible to sleep or to do anything whatever.

Digitized by Google

I am even forced to stop reading every moment or two. It is this pain which makes life look so black to me, I think.

Misery of misery!

Thursday, July 29th.—I find plenty of models. All these people of Auvergne are wonderfully obliging, and the women extremely flattering. I began with a little girl, about ten years of age, lying asleep in the grass; but to-morrow I leave her for a little fellow with a goat (life-size), which I shall finish, and then go back to my little girl. The boy with the goat is the son of a woodcarver, who has worked in the Paris shops. His mother is a seamstress and there are three pretty children.

Moreover, their shop faces the north, and, on rainy days, I shall make a study of a very dark shop, in which I shall place the little girl, who is about seven, and a charming child.

Saturday, July 31st.—Yesterday I began my picture on a No. 25 canvas. The grouping is very simple. The two children are seated beneath beautiful trees, covered with moss; there is a clearing in the distance through which can be seen the green country. The boy, who is twelve years old, is seated in front, a school-book under his left arm, and his eyes fixed upon vacancy. The little girl, who is six years old, has one hand upon his shoulder, and in the other holds a pear. The face is in profile and she seems to be speaking to him. The two children are seen from the knees only, for the picture is life-size.

Before leaving Paris, I read "Indiana," by George Sand, and I assure you it is not interesting. As the only other novels of hers that I have read are, "La Petite Fadette," "Indiana," and one or two others, perhaps I ought not to give an opinion, but at present, I do not recognize her talent at all.

And yet, everybody has praised her so much—still, I do not like her.

It is like Raphael's "Virgins." What I see at the Louvre does not please me. I saw Italy before I was able to judge, and what I saw then also displeased me. What is neither

Digitized by Google

divine nor terrestrial, it seems to me, is conventional and unworthy.

I intended to ride horseback, but I did not feel like doing anything, and, when I pass a day without working, I am attacked with frightful remorse, and there are days when I can do nothing; then, I tell myself, that if I wanted to, I could, and then I quarrel with myself, and then it all ends with a, "Well, let it all go; life is not worth living;" and then I smoke and read novels.

Tuesday, August 17th.—I have had to give up my painting in the open air, on account of the bad weather.

I have begun another (No. 15 canvas).

The scene is in the woodcarver's shop. On the left the woman is trying on the little boy a choir-boy's dress. The little girl, seated on an old chest, regards her brother with open eyes; the grandmother is near the stove, with folded hands, and smiling at the boy; the father, near the table, is reading the *Lanterne*, and glances over it at the red soutane, and the white surplice. The background is very complicated —a stove, old bottles, tools, a host of details, naturally somewhat hastily sketched in.

I have not the time to finish it, but I made the picture to familiarize myself with those things. The standing figures, the walls, and the other details frightened me, and I should have been in despair if I had been obliged to paint a picture of an interior. Now, it is not so, not that I can do it well, but I am not afraid of it.

The heads of my first sketch are nearly three fingers long.

And there are the dresses and everything to be done, and I have never done anything but the nude, except in my miserable *Salon* picture—and the hand! There are six hands and a half.

I have never had the perseverance to finish any piece of writing. Something happens. I have an idea; I sketch out what I want to say, and, the next day, I see in the journals an

Digitized by Google

article which resembles mine, and renders mine useless—mine, which, moreover, I have never finished, nor placed in a presentable state. My art studies have shown me that an effort is necessary to conquer the first difficulty. "It is only the first step that counts." The proverb has never struck me so forcibly as now.

And then, there is also, *above all*, the question of surroundings. Mine may be described, in spite of the best will in the world, as stupefying. The members of my family are, for the most part, ignorant and ordinary. Then, there is Madame G—, who is a thorough society woman; and the people who come to call. There is almost no conversation, and you know who our intimates are: M—, and some colorless young people. So that, I assure you, if I did not shut myself up so often alone, with my books, I should be even less intelligent than I am. I often become stupid. Words crowd together in my mouth, and I can not speak. I listen; I smile vaguely, and that is all.

Wednesday, August 18th.—We have ridden too long to-day. Five hours on horseback, and with this debilitating treatment—I am literally worn out.

I fear the treatment will prove that brute of a doctor to be right, when he said that I was weak. It is true that, when I finished, he assured me that, to have borne so well twenty-one baths, I must be very strong. Medicine is a sorry science.

We went up to the summit of Sancy. The mountains, which surround the horrible Mont Dore, appear flat from this height. The view from the top of Sancy is really grand. I would like to see a sunrise from there. The distant horizon is of a bluish tint, which makes me think of the Mediterranean. The ascent on foot is very fatiguing, but when you reach the top, you seem to dominate the world.

There were a crowd of people, who had come like us, and who were a blot upon the face of nature.

Digitized by Google

Thursday, August 19th.—I am good-for-nothing this morning. My eyes and my brain are tired. And to think that I can not go away until Saturday! To-day it is too late; to-morrow is Friday, and if I should travel on Friday, I should think that the misfortunes which are always happening to me, happened on that account.

Paris, Sunday, August 22d.—Eight o'clock. How pretty and comfortable my studio looks!

I have been reading the weekly illustrated papers, and some pamphlets. Everything goes on the same as before, just as if I had never been away.

Two o'clock in the afternoon. I console (!) myself by thinking that my troubles are only the equivalent of those of every kind, which artists in general have to conquer, as I have neither poverty, nor the tyranny of relatives to suffer from, and that is what artists usually complain of, is it not?

I shall not get rid of my troubles because I have talent, unless I produce a work of genius. But works of genius have never been produced after only three years' study, and there are so many to-day, who are talented.

My intentions are good, but suddenly I commit follies, as in a dream. I despise and detest myself, as I despise and detest my family and everybody else. Oh, my family! Listen! On our journey, my aunt employed twenty little stratagems to have me sit on the side opposite the open window. Tired out, I consented on condition that it should remain open, and I was no sooner asleep, than she closed it. I awoke, exclaiming that I would break open the window with my heels, but we had reached our destination. And then, at breakfast, what looks of anguish and what theatrical frowns because I did not eat! These people evidently love me; but it seems to me that, when one loves, one ought to know better than to do such things.

Sincere indignation produces eloquence.

When a man is indignant, or thinks himself indignant with

Digitized by Google

a government, he mounts the tribune and wins renown. But a woman has no tribune at her disposal; moreover, she is besieged by fathers and mothers, stepfathers and stepmothers, etc., who worry her all day long; she becomes indignant, and she is eloquent before her dressing-table. Result—zero.

And then, mamma talks all the time about God: "If it is God's will!" "With the help of God!" When one invokes God so often, it is only to excuse the neglect of all sorts of little duties.

This is not faith, nor even religion; it is a mania, a weakness, the cowardice of the lazy, the incapable, and the indolent. What more indelicate than to cover all one's shortcomings by the word "God?" It is not only indelicate, it is more, it is criminal, if one believes in God. "If it is ordained that such a thing shall happen, it will happen," she says, to avoid the trouble of exerting herself and to ward off remorse.

If everything were foreordained, God would be only a constitutional president, and free-will, vice, virtue, meaningless words.

Thursday, September 2d.—"Moreover, he read much, he sought for that deep, serious knowledge one can get only from one's self, and to the obtaining of which all people of talent devote themselves between the ages of twenty and thirty." This paragraph, copied from Balzac, flatters me.

I have hired a garden at Passy, 45 Rue du Ranelagh, to pursue my studies in the open air. I have begun with Irma, nude, standing under a leafless tree—life-size.

It is still warm enough, but I have no time to lose. That is how my life passes, and I like it so much; but yet I have strange forebodings of I know not what; it seems to me that something is going to happen. No! Alone and working, I will believe myself safe; but men are so mean, so wicked, that they will seek you out to cause you pain.

But what can happen? I don't know. Somebody will invent some falsehood or other; I shall hear of it and be miserable.

Digitized by Google

Or some villainous deed will be done to me, not serious, but sad and humiliating, one of those things that are so apt to happen to me.

All this keeps me away from Biarritz.

"Go there," Madame G— said to me; "you must go there. I will tell your mother or your aunt so. Go to Biarritz; it is very charming, and you will meet everybody."

Bah! how these society women talk! Well, if they will only leave me in peace, I will remain in my garden at Passy.

Tuesday, September 7th.—It is raining, and all the worst incidents of my life pass in review before me, and there are things, far back in the past now, the very thought of which makes me start and clinch my hands as if a physical pain had suddenly shot through me.

If I am to be better, all my surroundings must be changed. My family are disagreeable to me. I know beforehand all that my aunt or mamma will say or do under such and such circumstances; how they will behave in the drawing-room, out walking, at a watering-place, etc., and it all grates horribly upon my nerves, as if someone were sharpening a knife.

I would have to change all my surroundings, and then, when I had become tranquil, I should, doubtless, love them as they deserve to be loved. Meantime, however, they are worrying the life out of me. If I refuse a dish at the table, they look frightened; they employ a thousand little stratagems not to have ice used at the table, because it may do me harm. They come on tiptoe to close the windows that I have opened. A thousand little nonsensical actions irritate me and make me hate everything and everybody in the house. And what makes me especially uneasy is that I am rusting in this solitude; all these somber colors dim my intelligence and force me back into myself. I fear that these dark clouds will leave a lasting mark upon my character, and render me bitter, sour, and morose. I have no desire to be like that, and I fear to become so, on account of the rage which I keep pent up within me.

Digitized by Google

They say that my manners are perfect; the old Bonapartists told Adeline so. But what difference does it make? It seems to me that misfortune is always hanging over me.

I am always afraid of being slandered, humiliated, pointed at, and there must be some reason for it, whatever anyone says. You see, my family does not know what it has done to me. My sadness alarms me only because I fear to lose forever all those brilliant qualities which are so indispensable to women.

Why live? What am I accomplishing here? What do I possess? Neither fame, nor happiness, nor even peace!

Friday, September 10th.—Deep emotion for my aunt to-day! Doctor Fauvel, who examined me a week ago, and found nothing the matter, examined me again to-day, and found my bronchial tubes affected. He seemed serious, moved, and a little confused at not having foreseen the grave nature of the malady; then he prescribed the usual remedies for consumptives, cod-liver oil, painting with iodine, warm milk, flannel, etc., and finally advised me to see Doctor Sée or Doctor Potain, or to call them in to consult with him. You can imagine my aunt's face! It only amused me. For a long time I have suspected something of the sort, I coughed all last winter, and I cough and choke now. Besides, it would be astonishing if I did not have something the matter with me; I should be well contented to have something serious that would end it all. My aunt is terrified, but I rejoice. Death has no terrors for me; I would not dare to kill myself, but I long for the end. If you but knew—I shall not put on any flannel, nor will I paint myself with iodine. I do not care to be cured. Without that, I shall have health and life enough left to do what I want to do.

Friday, September 17th.—Yesterday I went again to the doctor who has charge of my ears, and he confessed that he did not expect it would be so grave a matter, and that I would never hear as well as before. I was completely overwhelmed by this intelligence. It is horrible. I am certainly not deaf,

Digitized by Google

but I hear as one would see through a thin veil. For instance, I can no longer hear the tick of the clock in my room, and, perhaps, I shall never hear it except by holding it close to my ear. This is a *real* misfortune. In conversation, sometimes, many things escape me—well, let me thank heaven that I am not yet blind or dumb. I write all bent over, and if I try to straighten up, I have a terrible pain. Tears always affect me in that way. When the Prince Imperial died, I had the same trouble. I have been crying ever since morning.

Tuesday, September 28th.—I have been happy ever since last night. I dreamed of *him.* He was ugly and ill, but that is of no consequence. I understand now that beauty is not the quality that inspires love. We talked like two friends, as before; as we shall talk again, if we ever meet. I would ask only one thing, that our friendship might not transgress those limits beyond which it would be liable to change.

It was more of a reality than a dream, and I have never been so happy as I was last night.

Saint-Amand came to breakfast. An avalanche of compliments; I am this and that, and they will make me this winter the center of a brilliant circle; he will bring to me the celebrities, all the *somebodies*, etc. I had no need of this to make me any happier, for I awoke laughing.

Dumas Fils says that young girls do not love, but *prefer*, for they do not know what *love* is. And what, indeed, is your idea of love, Monsieur Dumas?

In the first place, one always has almost enough knowledge to know that—. And then, what Monsieur Dumas calls *love*, is only the consequence and natural complement of love, and not at all a thing apart, isolated, and complete; at least, that is true as far as people who are at all decent go. "A consequence often inevitable and without which there can be no love," says the same Dumas; and he calls it also "the supreme expression of love." That, I can believe; but to say that a young girl can not love is foolish. I, for instance, *I know*

Digitized by Google

nothing of it, and yet, I feel that it would be something repulsive with a disagreeable being, and that it is "the supreme expression of love," *when* one loves. Now, there are also foolish ideas which sometimes flit through my brain, but I know very well what they are—when the man is not repulsive; but they have nothing at all to do with love. What would disgust me most, would be to kiss the lips of a man to whom I was indifferent; I do not believe that I could ever do it.

But when one loves, ah! it is so different. So last night, in my dream, I loved, as if I had been awake; and it was so pure, so tender, so beautiful. Love is a grand, pure sentiment, and everything about it is chaste.

The *love* of Monsieur Dumas is not the thing itself, but only a consequence of what one feels, a means to love better and love more the person one already loves.

Wednesday, September 29th.—Since yesterday, my complexion has been astonishingly clear and fresh, and pretty, and my eyes brilliant, and animated; even the contour of my face seems more delicate and beautiful. It is a shame, however, that all this should be at a time when I see no one. It is stupid to tell it, but I spent half an hour delightedly gazing at myself in the glass; it is some time since that has happened to me.

Friday, October 1st.—A Russian family, who came to see us, told me of what is taking place in Russia. Their eldest daughter is under the closest surveillance of the police, because, she said, one examination day, when the grand duke was expected to be present, that she would infinitely prefer to pass her examination than to receive a visit from the grand duke. Then, she was very near-sighted, and wore an eye-glass, thanks to which she was denounced to the police; eye-glasses being, when worn by women, the sign of advanced ideas. For a word, one is transported, poisoned, or exiled. *Domiciliary visits* are made at night, and if you are not very dangerous, you are exiled to Viatka, or to Perm; if you are

Digitized by Google

considered very much so, you are condemned to Siberia, or you are executed. They say that there is not a family, where some member has not been executed or sent to Siberia, or, at least, is under surveillance. The system of espionage is so thoroughly organized that it is impossible to talk in your own house, with your own family, without what you have said being reported to the authorities.

Poor country! and I accused myself the other day of cowardice because I did not wish to go there! But is it possible? The Socialists are atrocious scoundrels who rob and murder; the government is arbitrary and stupid, and these two shocking elements are continually warring, and between the two, wise, intelligent people are crushed. The Russian girl told me, after a talk of two hours, that for the tenth of what I had said I would be executed or sent to the galleys for life, and if I go to Russia my fate is settled.

I shall go to Russia when there is in that beautiful country some respect for the rights of the people; when one can be useful there and not risk being exiled for saying "the censure is very severe!"

All this excites me greatly. Is there no possibility of establishing an honest liberal party? for I hate the crimes of socialism as much as those of the government.

Ah! if it were not for my painting, how I—

Oh, Frenchmen! who say that you are neither happy nor free! There is taking place in Russia now what took place in France under the reign of terror; a word, a gesture, and one is lost. Ah! how much still remains to be done that men may even approach happiness! "We are on the road to the deliverance of woman," says Dumas Fils; "when that is done, we must try to deliver God, and as then there will be a perfect understanding between the three eternal bodies, God, man, and woman, we shall see clearer and advance more swiftly."

The woman question is exceedingly important, and when one thinks that everything has progressed except that, one is

Digitized by Google

really stupefied. Read Dumas' pamphlet, "Women who Vote and Women who Kill." Dumas' biting talents do not offend me in these pages, although he makes man still a little too haughty toward woman; but, taken altogether, it is good.

Saturday, October 2d.—A lady, whose portrait I drew, has paid me by sitting for a study of hands. Tony was adorable; he was on his way to correct the "Jewess" when he perceived the hands.

"Who did that?"

"I, Monsieur."

"It is very real, very real, very real;" then, after another look at the study, he repeated, "It is very real, very real, very real;" and, after another pause, "It is very real." He seemed agreeably surprised, and you can imagine my delight!

Then he sat down beside me and gave me a lesson. "It is a good study, you must do others like it; there are some *charming tints* in it." I underline the words, because my comrades, not knowing what else to find fault with, deny that my coloring is good.

"Unfortunately, it is not entirely well drawn; but, in the second study, that will not be the case, I am sure. It is a fault you will not commit twice; in short, it is good, very good."

I turned white and red. I wish you could see my importance in the studio. I have the most talent of any, and so much has been said to me that I am beginning to speak unctuously, like Cassagnac. But do not fear that my success will turn my head.

I am pleased with my painting, and I am improving in every way.

The hands are painted on a No. 6 canvas, the left outspread upon the table and the right holds a pen, as if it had stopped to read over what it had written. That is awfully expressed; but you know what I mean.

Sunday, October 3d.—I am sad.

Digitized by Google

You see, there is nothing to be done. For four years my laryngitis has been treated by the most celebrated doctors and it becomes continually worse.

The last three days my ears were better, and I heard well; but to-day they are just as bad as ever.

Wait, I will make a prophecy.

I am going to die, but not immediately; immediately would end everything, it would be too much happiness. I am going to linger on with rheumatism, cough, fever, all sorts of things.

Monday, October 4th.—I sent to my professor at Naples for some music for the mandolin, and I have just received his answer.

I shall keep his letter, because of its charming Italian phrasing, although coming from an ordinary man. I confess that in spite of my *realistic* tendencies (a word little understood) and my republican sentiments, I am very fond of flowery language.

After all, why can not the two things go together?

But the flowery style must be left to the Italians. In other nations it is ridiculous. Oh, God! when shall I be able to go to Italy?

How dull every other place is after Italy! No one and nothing has ever produced in me the strong emotion that the memory of that country does.

Why not go now? And my painting? Am I strong enough to continue it without instruction? I do not know.

No. I will remain this winter in Paris. I will go to Italy, for the carnival; pass the winter of 1881–82 in St. Petersburg; and return to Paris, or Italy, for 1882 and 1883. And then, I will marry a nobleman with 15,000 or 20,000 francs a year, who will be glad to take me and my fortune. Am I not very wise to give myself three years to look about me, before capitulating?

Tuesday, October 5th.—I must be resigned, or rather summon up all my courage, examine my heart to its very depths, and then

Digitized by Google

ask myself *if this*, after all, is not a matter of indifference. What does it matter, if I have lived in one way, or another? I must conquer my feelings and say, with Epictetus, that I am free to accept evil for good, or rather to remain indifferent to whatever happens. One must have suffered horribly to become resigned to going out of life into this species of death, and it is only after unspeakable sufferings and thorough despair that one begins to understand the possibility of this living death. But, if one can learn to accept it, one could be tranquil, at least. It is not a vain dream, *it is a possible thing*. But why live at all? you will say. True, but it is only after having recognized that real life is for you a succession of endless evils that you accept the other, or hide yourself from the first in the second.

When one has reached a certain point of physical suffering, one loses consciousness or falls into delirium; it is the same thing when mental sufferings have reached a certain point; one soars above them, one is astonished to have suffered, one despises everything and marches on with head erect, like the martyrs.

What matters it, after all, whether the fifty years that I may have to live, be passed in a prison or palace, in society or in solitude? The end is the same. What trouble me are the feelings which have been repressed between the beginning and the end, and which leave no trace. But what matters a thing which does not last, and which leaves no trace? I can utilize my life by working, since I have talent; perhaps that will leave its traces—after death.

Saturday, October 9th.—I have not worked this week, and inaction makes me stupid. I have read over my journey to Russia, and it has interested me very much. In Russia I read a part of "Mademoiselle de Maupin." What I read did not please me; but to-day I have read it again, the whole of it, because Théophile Gautier is recognized as possessing great talent, and "Mademoiselle de Maupin" is considered a master-

Digitized by Google

piece, especially the preface. The preface, it is true, is very good; but the book? Despite all its—nudities, it is not interesting and some of it is positively wearisome. I hear people exclaim: "But the language, the style!" Yes, it is written in good French and by a man who is a master in his profession; but his talents are not such as inspire sympathy. When I am older, I will, perhaps, be able to understand why it is a masterpiece. Even now I understand that it is a fine piece of work, but it both repels and wearies me.

Take George Sand. There is another writer with whom I have no sympathy, and George Sand is inferior to Gautier in that she does not possess that audacity and vigor which give you respect, if not friendship, for him. George Sand! Oh, she is well enough; but I prefer Daudet among modern writers; he writes only novels, but they are strewn with just observations, with things that are full of truth and feeling. There is life in his books.

As for Zola, we are not on good terms; he has attacked, in the *Figaro*, Ranc and others of the Republican party, with a virulence which is in bad taste, and which is unbecoming both to his great genius and his high literary station.

But what do people see in George Sand? A novel prettily written? Yes, and what else? Her novels bore me, while Balzac, the two Dumas, Zola, Daudet, and Musset never do. Victor Hugo, in his most wildly romantic prose, in "*Han D'Islande*," for instance, never bores me. You can feel his genius. But George Sand! How can one read 300 pages filled with the actions and gestures of *Valentine* and *Benedict* accompanied by an uncle, a gardener, and I don't know what.

Always the leveling of ranks by love—an ignoble theme.

Let equality be established, that is admirable, but do not let it be due to the caprices of the sexual feeling. A countess in love with her valet, and endless dissertations upon the subject, that is George Sand's talent. They are certainly very pretty stories

Digitized by Google

with very pretty descriptions of scenery—but I would like something more—I don't know exactly how to express myself. There are some things which I wish I did not think, for instance, I think always that I am addressing beings who are my superiors, and before whom I fear to speak with a pretense of knowledge, while, in general, my hearers are of mediocre, or inferior intelligence, and such people never appreciate modesty or an avowal of weakness.

Well, I am reading "Valentine" now, and it irritates me because the book interests me enough to make me want to finish it, and at the same time I feel that it will leave nothing in my mind except a vaguely disagreeable feeling; it seems to me that such reading lowers me. I am revolted and yet I go on reading and shall go on to the end unless it prove as tiresome as the "*Dernier Amour*" of the same author. "Valentine," however, is the best of George Sand's books that I have read. The "Marquis de Villemer" is also good; I believe it contains no groom in love with a countess.

Sunday, October 10th.—Saint-Amand and some other people. We had some music and he wept over the airs from "Paul and Virginia." I can understand his emotion. I wept when I read the book, and the music of the opera made me weep in the same places.

I spent the morning at the Louvre and I was dazzled. I never have appreciated the works of art until this morning. Hitherto, I looked and did not see. It was like a revelation. Before, I went there and admired politely like the great majority of people. Ah! When one understands and feels art as I do, one can possess no ordinary soul. To feel what is beautiful and to understand why it is so, is a great happiness.

Monday, October 11th.—I set to work at my painting to-day, still excited by what I saw yesterday; it is impossible not to achieve some measure of success when one has revelations like that of yesterday.

Digitized by Google

Tuesday, October 12th.—Yesterday, I received the following dispatch from Poltava:

"All the nobility offer through us their congratulations upon the unanimous election of your father. We drink your health.

"ABAZA.
"MANDERSTERN."

Abaza is the one I knew in Russia, the most important personage at Poltava, after having been so at St. Petersburg and Odessa.

Manderstern is the marshal of the nobility of the government, as my father is of the district of Poltava. I telegraphed back the following answer: I had to be polite, for family affairs are nobody's business, and then it was a sort of—how shall I say it—it was almost official, ceremonious.

"Flattered by their kind attention, I cordially thank the worthy representatives of the nobility of Poltava, and wish them every prosperity.

"MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF."

It was a fine answer, the dispatch of a great man, and then it was not in the telegraphic style, with all the short words omitted. In short, my girl, I am proud of you.

I have read over again "Paul and Virginia" very carefully, and I willingly excused the somewhat old-fashioned style as I read the description of the virtues of those charming people. I cried heartily over it.

You know when *Paul* returns to his neighbor's house and calls out from afar to the negress, *Marie:* "Where is Virginia?" *Marie* turns away her head and begins to weep. And I did, too. It is too bad for that boy to return and find her gone. Then, he runs up the rock and sees the ship which is now only a black speck; oh, how angry it makes one on his account.

I wept and I wept. And when *Paul* said to the dog, which was running before him: "You will never see her again," I felt as though I could not bear it. And *Virginia's* letter in which she sends the violets to *Paul.* But the saddest of all is when she has gone, and from the top of the rock he looks

Digitized by Google

at the black spot on the horizon. Bernardin Saint Pierre did not know, himself, what he was accomplishing; it is a passage sublime in its simplicity and incomparable in its pathos.

Friday, October 15th.—I have taken up again the portrait which I commenced, sometime ago, of one of Julian's pupils; not the yellow-haired one, another; a lovely creature. Brown hair with red reflections in it. Such freshness and vivacity! A lovely complexion (it will be too ruddy sometime, perhaps), exquisite brown eyes, and a divine mouth. Still, there is something a little ordinary in her front face; I am doing it in profile. Her neck and arms are splendid in form and color.

She is twenty-five years old, and a widow, with a little boy of five or six. If she were a model, I would engage her for the whole year.

She has also beautiful hands and a beautiful skin. It is impossible to describe the extraordinary brilliancy of her face. I already have an idea of her as a subject for the *Salon*. I shall give her her portrait, and she has well earned it, for she poses like an angel. I have dressed her after the fashion of Greuze, a waist of cream-colored damask and a fichu of India muslin.

I shall never dare to ask her to sit for me for the *Salon*, it would be a month's work. If I could discover some way of paying her, but that is impossible. I have already asked her, laughingly, to pose, but I really meant it. Ah, what a model! I could do something splendid with her.

In the same way, as three years ago, I made white the fashion, they now copy my crossed draperies and my pointed belt. It is very annoying.

Saturday, October 16th.—Among all sorts of good things, Tony said: "Take it all together, I am very much pleased." Then followed the lesson. I am very much pleased, too. Every Saturday I am afraid and then I am delighted.

It is the only thing that I look at seriously.

Digitized by Google

My brilliant model, who is named Madame G—, will sit for a picture, provided that it is not too nude. I do not know what her position in life is, but I suppose that she does not work for a living, since she comes to the studio and sits as much as I want for this portrait. It makes no difference, she is really very nice.

She had promised me the use of her hands and arms in exchange for the head of her son, but now a whole picture! Do you know, it is an affair of six weeks, perhaps! She is fresh, young, brilliant, with something touchingly maternal in her face, too. I will have a handsome frame for it.

Tuesday, October 19th.—Alas! after dragging out a few miserable years, all this will end in death.

I have had some suspicion that that would be the case. One can not live with a head like mine. I am like the children who have too much brain.

I needed too many things to be happy; and circumstances have been such that I am deprived of everything, except physical ease.

Two, or three, years ago, and even six months ago, whenever I went to a new doctor in the hope of recovering my voice, he would ask me if I had such and such a symptom, and, as I would answer in the negative, he would say: "There is nothing the matter with the bronchial tubes, or the lungs, it is only the larynx." Now, I am beginning to feel all those things which the doctors asked me about. Therefore, the bronchial tubes and the lungs must be affected. Fauvel ordered iodine and a blister; naturally, I uttered cries of horror. I would rather break an arm than be blistered. Three years ago, in Germany, a physician at the springs told me that he found something in the left lung, under the shoulder-blade. I laughed at him; but yet, at Nice, five years ago, I had felt, at times, a pain in that place; still, I was convinced that I was going to have a hump, as two of my aunts, sisters of my father, are humpbacks, and some months ago I was asked if

Digitized by Google

I felt anything there, and I thoughtlessly answered, no. Now, when I cough, or even draw a long breath, I feel it there, in my back, on the right side. All these things, together, make me think that there is really something the matter with me. I feel a sort of pride in demonstrating that I am ill; but it does not please me much. It is a horrible death, very slow—four, five, ten years, perhaps, and one becomes so thin and ugly.

I have not grown thin much. I am just about right; but I have a tired look; I cough considerably, and I breathe with difficulty. For the last four years, I have been treated by the most celebrated doctors, and marched off to watering-places, and not only I have not recovered my beautiful voice—so beautiful that I shed tears when I think of it—but I grow more and more ill, and I am, let me say the horrible word, a little deaf.

Well, if death only comes quickly, I will not complain.

Have you ever happened to open your mouth, or take up your pen, to say that you do not believe in something which you did believe in once, and even while you are saying: "How could I have thought that?" to be seized by the old idea, and to believe in it again, or, at least, to strongly doubt the new one? It was in this condition that I have made the sketch of a picture. While waiting for the artist, the model, a little blonde woman, is seated astride a chair, and smoking a cigarette, while looking at a skeleton, between whose teeth she has placed a pipe. Her garments are scattered on the floor, to the left; on the right, her boots, an open cigar-case, and a little bunch of violets. One of her legs is passed through the back of the chair; she is leaning on her elbow, one hand under her chin. One stocking is on the ground, and the other still hanging on her foot. It will afford a very great chance for coloring. By the way, I am becoming a *colorist*. Ah! I said that jokingly; but, nonsense apart, I feel color, and there is no comparison between my pictures two months ago, before I went to Mont Dore, and to-day.

Digitized by Google

You shall see that I will find thirty-six things to attach me to life, when I shall be good-for-nothing, ill, and repulsive.

Thursday, October 21st.—I showed Julian the picture that I painted at Mont Dore. He naturally criticised it severely, while saying that certain modern artists would find it very good; that it was a mixture of Bastien-Lepage and Bouvin; that there were interesting points in it; in fact, that it was an interesting picture, but that I paint "like a villain." In regard to the sketch of the young woman nursing her child, he simply said that a mother did not nourish her infant with the whole upper part of her body nude. I had composed this in a quiet key; the woman is seated upon a low chair of yellow plush, the legs stretched out, the feet naked, with one foot upon a stool; the head is in profile, the bust three-quarters. The infant pats the breast with its little hand. The background is composed of the curtains of the bed, and beyond, in the shadow, are some ferns in a blue Chinese vase. It is very quiet, but I must cover one shoulder, at least.

As for the sketch of the model and the skeleton, that affected him vividly. He said that it was low, disgusting! I added: "Yes, disgusting, and, for that very reason, natural." "But you can not put your name to this. It would make a scandal. But, by Jove, I do not say that you will become instantly a celebrated artist, but you will certainly be famous through your queer subjects. That is a picture which will cause a hue and a cry, especially if it is known that it is by a woman—a young girl. But that is the way with me, too; when I paint a picture, people cover their faces."

Friday, October 22d.—It is raining, dark, and piercing cold, and I am like the weather; and I cough all the time. Ah, what misery, and what a wretched existence! At half-past 3 it was too dark to paint, and I read all the evening, so that my eyes will be too weary to paint to-morrow. The few people that I care to see, I fly from; for fear of not hearing what they say. There are days when I hear very well, and others, no;

Digitized by Google

and in the latter case, it is a terrible punishment. So God is going to put an end to me! Well, I am prepared for all sorts of misery, so long as I don't see anyone. Every time the bell rings it makes me shudder. This new and horrible misfortune makes me fear all that I once desired. Still, I am always bright and gay with others; I laugh as much as Mademoiselle Samary, of the *Théâtre-Français*, but it is more a habit than a mask—I shall always laugh. It is ended; not only do I believe that it is ended, but I desire it to be. There are no words to paint my dejection.

Sunday, October 24th.—I have been to the Louvre. I always go there alone, knowing that I shall meet no one I know, Sunday mornings. You can only see well when alone. I am delighted with the pictures of the last century; they possess an inimitable and exquisite grace. That was a delightful time. Do you think that I was born for a laborious, studious, or heroic life? I would like to abandon myself to the most luxurious idleness, wrapped in gauzes like those of Watteau and Greuze, and in brocades of Rigaud. That was an exquisite century, a happy mixture of ancient and modern times, ancient prestige with English wash-stands. While before, they scarcely washed at all; that fact spoils for me all the fine adventures of the olden days.

Monday, October 25th.—I am reading "*Les Châtiments.*" Victor Hugo is certainly a genius, and I don't even know if I can say that certain of his lyrical passions astonished, not to say fatigued, me. No, I do not think it; it is beautiful, it is sublime, and despite the big arms, and the sweat, and the horrors, etc., it is human, natural, fine. But I like him, especially in moments of touching simplicity, the last act of "Hernani" when *Dona Sol* implores the clemency of the old man, and the language of the grandmother whose boy had received two bullets in the head.

Friday, October 29th.—A passage I have read in the New Testament is so extraordinarily in accord with the thoughts

Digitized by Google

that were guiding me, that I have returned once mc religious fervor, the miracles, Jesus Christ, and my pi prayers of the old days. For some time I have cc myself with one God, and my belief has been very pure, very severe, very simple; but now I return to a more familiar, more consoling religion, one more in consonance with the fears, the miseries, and the meanness of my nature.

The Man-God and the Virgin Mary seem to hear you more than the real God.

Monday, November 1st.—Our studio has become like that of the men; that is, we have all day the same model in the same pose, consequently we will be able to paint large pictures. I have wanted this for two or three months. Before, it would have been of no use; but I am ready now for this work. There are only eight of us, the other pupils, to the number of twenty-five, have gone to the new studio, which Julian has started at 51 Rue Vivienne, and where the arrangements are like our old one.

Tuesday, November 2d.—For the last week I have had my breakfast brought from the house to the studio. They bring it in a basket. It is much more sensible than hurrying from the Rue Vivienne to the Champs Élysées and losing the best hours of the day. In this way I work from 8 till noon and from 1 till 4.

Wednesday, November 10th.—It is horrible to have worked constantly for three months only to discover that I know nothing.

Thursday, November 11th.—Tony came, and when I explained to him my discouragement, he said that it proved that I am not blind, and he urges me to go on with my work and continue to study.

Well, it proves that I know more than before, since I see my ignorance clearly; but how sad it is! how much need I have of encouragement. I have had made a brown mantle with a monk's hood to put on in the studio, when I have to

Digitized by Google

sit near the window, where there is a frightful draught. So, I have a monk's hood, which has always brought me misfortune! I wept under this hood, and so much that that good Zilhardt, who came to see if it was not a joke, was dumbfounded. I want to paint a picture representing an expulsion of monks, and I therefore went to the Capuchins of the Rue de la Santé. The three fathers who remain there, told me all the details and showed me the place of the sad deed. I offered an asylum to two of the fathers at Nice. I hope that they will not take advantage of the offer.

Sunday, November 14th.—The Capuchin Convent at Versailles, having made the strongest resistance, I visited it, hoping it might answer my purpose.

Outside of the convent there are kneeling benches, where, in spite of the rain, the faithful come to kneel before the sealed doors of the chapel. Excited women, crying loudly that there is neither property nor law—heavens! how clumsily all this was done, and what advantage the monks have taken of it!

Shall then Gambetta be the strong man? In short, a man must arise. Will it then be the Bonapartist system, and principles, and the republic? Oh, do not be alarmed! I do not change; I still believe in the equality of man and woman—the only thing in the world to which I am sincerely attached. There are things which impose themselves on my good sense. They are few; but when I am thoroughly convinced, nothing in the world can move me, and it is with difficulty that I restrain myself from proclaiming my convictions from the house-tops, so delighted and proud am I of having found out something by myself, and of believing in it sincerely. For in so many things—in nearly all, alas!—I care only—only on the surface—for what may be said, or that I may not be shut out from everything, or for what it may bring me.

Therefore, a man, or rather men, are needed; those who are leading us here are stupid and ridiculous; it is humiliating to

Digitized by Google

the republic. Do not imagine I have been impressed by the kneeling benches in the rain. Even if they were sincere, I should not have been much affected. The church has lessened God, disfigured religion, or rather created, instead of the worship we owe to God, a religion complicated and full of charlatanism, which must be destroyed. The Capuchin father received us with scant courtesy, from the inside of his wicket, telling us we could obtain all information we required from the faithful. I made a rough sketch of the court-yard, but it does not suit me any better than the Rue de la Santé. I shall retouch it a little; but—that is all.

Tuesday, November 16th.—I believe I exaggerated the other day in regard to the Church, my remorse afterward almost drove me out of bed to make my apology here; for the Church teaches us to know God, the Church has made tremendous efforts for the preservation of morals, the Church has carried to savage nations the name of God and civilization. Without offense to God, I believe they might have been civilized without Catholicism; but then the Church, like feudalism, has been useful, and like it, has run, or nearly run, its course. There are too many things inadmissible and revolting, not to say odious, in Catholicism. The divine has been confused with the legendary; there are too many enlightened people nowadays for those venerable falsehoods to be respected. But we are traversing an epoch of transition, and, unfortunately, the masses are not as yet sufficiently enlightened not to pass from vain superstitions to contempt, and the negation of God.

There are men who are sincerely religious, but are there any who are sincere monarchists? There are people, to be sure, who believe that monarchy is necessary to the prosperity of certain countries. There, I had forgotten that, the other day, when I said that to love monarchy, one must have the soul of a lackey.

Let us suppose a country where constitutional monarchy

Digitized by Google

makes the happiness of the people; well, the proudest and noblest man may sincerely adhere to it, and even have a certain sincere attachment for the family, which has, for centuries, represented his country. But this is far from a servile attachment to a dynasty!

I do not say that I think it right to be a monarchist, even such a one as I have just described, but we may admit that we are sincerely attached to monarchy, and believe in it in our heart, under the conditions aforesaid.

A monarchy is certainly impossible in France, neither can there be a monarchy which we can conscientiously prefer to the republic. And is there a single candidate who is not debased or dishonored? Monsieur de Chambord? The Orleanists who inevitably follow him? But, after all, the Orleanists, patiently supported during centuries, might become "that family which represents the country" of whom I spoke a little while ago, and the stupidities exacted at a court, would be the sacrifice of your personal pride, which you would make to your country. Without doubt; but of what good is all that, when there is a republic, which has all that is good in a constitutional monarchy and none of its defects, and which is the most beautiful and most noble of governments?

There is always something revolting in the sovereign honors rendered to a manikin monarch by a minister or a statesman of genius, who, whatever he may do, will always be the domestic of the monarch, who is a nonentity, a dolt, or, perhaps, an imbecile.

Friday, November 19th.—Instead of taking my lesson at home, I had my negress come to the studio, where she sang for over an hour.

The gas was lighted, and fifteen women, presided over by Julian, placed themselves at the end of the studio, while Madame Ponce, with her guitar, climbed on the model table, in the midst of a volley of applause. If you think I am in good humor, ah, then, you are mistaken! Julian criticised my

Digitized by Google

painting most severely. It was badly drawn, cold in expression, not true in tone, and the effect misunderstood. What he said made me miserable! But I console myself a little in thinking that I knew it was not good, and, therefore, it affects me less. Ah, had I thought it good and been thus criticised! But, bah! I know what a good painting should be.

I counted on painting to attain my aim! Wait a little, my old lady!

Still, I am always afraid of melting into tears.

Saturday, November 27th.—The competition is finished. I should like to predict the result now, but I really can not. I am not pleased with what I have done; I have dust in my eyes, and the days when I painted the most were dark. This is the first day I have felt in good spirits, so I have repainted the whole head, which is improved; but, all the same, I do not like it; but, I must admit, it is the best of all.

I am not sure I have sketched as well as I might; and, although I always judge myself quite accurately, I am sometimes mistaken. Even should I receive the medal I would think my work a horror, but that means nothing. In fact, I wish very much to have it, as it would raise my spirits. And then it would prove that I have painted a head, which has been approved by Tony, Bouguereau, Lefebvre, and Boulanger. As you know, the medal is given only when it is deserved; when there is nothing of merit the drawings are classed, and that is all.

Wednesday, December 1st.—After leaving the studio, I called for Madame de D—, and we went to 12 Rue Cail, the residence of Mademoiselle Hubertine Auclerc. It was a Wednesday. We pulled the bell three times in vain, and were coming down talking with the janitor, when a young woman arrived. We were standing undecided, and I recognized her instantly.

The janitor recalled us, and Mademoiselle Auclerc invited us to walk up. *Rights of women; social siege.* The words written on the door had, before the arrival of the young woman,

Digitized by Google

already given me something of the enthusiasm of former days, and I made a pretense of embracing Madame de D—.

The office was very poor, simple, and bare. She lighted a fire, and seated herself before the chimney, Madame de D— at her right, and I at her left; my companion was the first to speak. Then I told her that I could not help feeling a great emotion in the presence of the woman, who had so courageously undertaken the defense of our rights. Madame de D— is French, widow of an Englishman—Norskott; I of foreign origin, but brought up in France, and called Pauline Orelle, my secret design being to make a portrait of Hubertine for the *Salon*. I have adopted the pseudonym of Daria, for painting. It is a Russian baptismal name, very pretty, and very simple. In fact, she will do very well for the purpose—dark; her complexion is not, perhaps, clear, but it was cold, and there are days when we appear to disadvantage. Small hands, somewhat red, and small feet. Her appearance and language were very proper. She is sympathetic and genteel; her accent not too ladylike. She gave us a programme, a small pamphlet, and we shook hands, promising to join, to come again, to pay the dues of 25 francs per month, and to attend conferences.

"Then! We shall meet again next Wednesday at 8 o'clock."

I was very amiable, and said that the principal argument of reactionaries—homeliness, age, and grotesqueness of the members of the conferences—could not be admitted, for, "you are young and pretty."

I am contented—no, not yet—for this may turn out badly, as everything else has done. We shall see.

Sunday, December 5th.—Doctor Potain was here this morning, and wishes me to go South to remain until the month of March; if not, I shall soon be unable to breathe or move from my bed. How well I am doing!! For four years I have done all that the celebrities have ordered, and I go from bad to worse. I have even gone so far as to mar my beauty by putting iodine on my right clavicle and still I am no better.

Digitized by Google

Could, perchance, my ordinary annoyances have any influence on my health? But then the larynx, the bronchial tubes are not generally subject to moral affections. I know nothing about it. I do all they tell me; commit no imprudences, bathe only in warm water, and still I am ill.

Villevieille told me yesterday that when Tony came to correct Saturday, he asked to see our competition paintings, and found that my eyes were peculiarly drawn, but there was something very pretty about it, and the tone was charming. He is not satisfied with the competition in general. If I do not obtain the medal, I shall have, all the same, made a good study.

Wednesday, December 8th.—This evening, the Citizenesses Alexandrine Norskott and Pauline Orelle, assisted at the weekly work of the "Woman's Rights Society." All this took place in Hubertine's small parlor.

At the left, on a desk, stood a lamp; on the right the chimney, surmounted by a bust of the republic, and in the center of the room, with its back to the window, which faces the door, stood a table loaded with bundles of paper, ornamented by a candle, a bell, and a president, who appeared to be very stupid and very dirty. At the left of the president, Hubertine, who was rubbing her hands continually, and whenever she spoke, lowered her eyes. At the right, an old withered socialist and fury, who repeatedly cried, "that if there was anything to strike, she would strike the first blow." About twenty old hags, species of door-keepers in tumble-down lodging-houses, and a few men, the outcasts of all we can imagine; waiters with long hair and impossible head-coverings, whom we would not like to listen to in drinking-houses. I had on a black wig, and had darkened my eyebrows. The men clamored on socialism, collectivism, and the treachery of deputies in high places. The red-headed woman in the corner declared war against religion, at which Madame de D— (Norskott) protested, and delivered several snatches of speeches, which produced a

Digitized by Google

good impression. Moreover, Hubertine is very wise, and understood that it was not a question of proletarians, nor of millionaires, but of the woman in general, who claims her rights. It is to this view that they should confine themselves. Instead of that, they discuss the different shades of politics.

We were enrolled, we paid, voted, etc., and that is all for the present.

Monday, December 13th.—I scorn slanders, because I can do nothing against them, and by this semblance of contempt, I set my mind at rest, and also because there are so many slanders that I have become accustomed to it. You know my life; judge me. I do not say this that you may exalt my virtues, for my imprudences and follies are sufficient to blacken me somewhat. But then, that is done with; let us pass on. I accept, all the same, the responsibility; accord me the extenuating circumstances.

Tuesday, December 21st.—There is no longer any buzzing in my ears, and I hear perfectly well.

Wednesday, December 22d.—The medal was won by a sketch of the Rue Vivienne, done by a newly arrived American girl; I received first mention.

Thursday, December 23d.—As it was getting late I left the portrait and began to make an outline, still searching for a subject for the *Salon*. Julian came in and found it very pretty. I then followed him into the antechamber and asked him if that would answer. Why yes, very well, only it is a calm and girlish subject, and he thought that I could find something better. And then he reproached me for the tenth time at least, for not having made the portrait of Madame N— on a larger canvas, and with more drapery, for the Exposition. It must be said that this bore comes up every time I speak of the *Salon*. But that you may understand the effect it has upon me, you must know that this portrait neither pleases nor amuses me, that I made it through complacency; that the model was by no means striking; that I made it because in a

Digitized by Google

moment of enthusiasm I promised—that idiotic enthusiasm which makes me willing to give anything, and makes me rack my brain to find what I might offer, and how I could better please, no matter whom, everybody. And if you think that this happens rarely! It is nearly always thus, except when I am too much wearied—and yet—

It is not even a good quality, it is in my nature to wish to make the happiness of everybody and to encumber myself with stupid tendernesses! You do not know this and I pass for egotistic; you should reverse your judgment. Thus, this portrait which I hastened to finish, is continually thrust under my nose for that exhibition which has preoccupied me for a year, of which I dream, and on which I had built such great hopes. Then it seems that this is done that I may not exhibit at all; I say it seems, because it would be too cruel for me, if you believed it to be true. And then always that bore of a portrait, which he says I should do at the studio as I would then do it better.

In short, I don't know what to exhibit. This said, you will not be astonished that I should have returned home with my teeth tightly clenched and not daring to make a movement, for fear of bursting into tears, and weeping as I do now. How foolish it was for me to believe that something was possible for me!

Oh, nothingness!

Now all is chaos, and the question of the *Salon* could make me shriek with pain. This is where I have come to after three years of work! "You must obtain a phenomenal success," said Julian, but I could not. I have worked three years, and what have I done? What am I? Nothing. That is to say, I am a good pupil, and that is all; but the phenomenon, the thunderbolt, the splendor!

This strikes me like a great unexpected disaster, and the truth is so cruel that I already try to believe that I exaggerate. It was painting that proved a stumbling-block in my path; as

Digitized by Google

long as it was a question of drawing I astonished the professors, but I have painted for two years. I am above the average, I know. I even show extraordinary ability, as Tony said, but something more was wanted. After all, it is not there. But it stuns me like a violent blow on the head, and I can not think of it, however remotely, without feeling horribly hurt; and then the tears come!

Behold, this is good for the eyes! I am lost! I am vanquished, dead, and what frightful rage! I am heart-broken!

It drives me wild to think that I may die before I achieve fame!

My despair is so great that I am sure that will be my fate.

Friday, December 24th.—Having had bad dreams I went to the studio, where Julian made me the following offer: "Promise me that the painting shall be mine, and I will indicate a subject which will give you celebrity, or at least notoriety for the space of a week after the opening of the *Salon.*" Naturally I promised. He made the same proposition to A—, and after having written and signed the engagement, with Magnan and Madeleine as witnesses, half laughing, half serious, he brought us into his study, and offered me as a subject, a corner of the studio with three persons in the foreground, life-size, and others as accessories; and to A— the whole studio of 51 Rue Vivienne, on a small scale.

He demonstrated to us the advantages of the subject during a good half-hour; after which I returned to my portrait, agitated, and my head aching so, that I could do nothing the rest of the day. This was the result of yesterday.

As to the subject, it does not commend itself much to me; but it may be very interesting, and then Julian is so enthusiastic, so convinced; he cited so many instances of success with such subjects; and a woman's studio has never been painted.

Furthermore, as it would be a recommendation for him, he would do all that was possible to give me that famous

Digitized by Google

notoriety of which he spoke. A great undertaking like this is difficult. But we shall see.

At half-past 3 o'clock we went down with Villevieille with the intention of seeing the booths on the boulevards, but wishing to get a glimpse of the master's new studio, we went in. Villevieille, who plays like an artist, seated herself at the piano while I wrote verses for the master. He entered in a short time and we spent two hours there with my aunt, who had come after me.

The studio is very pretty, adjoining that of the men on the ground floor. We had rather an amusing time and we talked a great deal about the painting. Julian desires it for many reasons; first, because he has not the time to make it himself, then to please me, and then to enrage Breslau, and prove my strength to those who will not believe in me. All this is well enough, but here I am, suspecting that he is offering me this plan, that I may sink in the mire, and do nothing. It was stipulated that the painting should belong to him whether I finished it or not.

I graciously intimated my suspicions to him; he answered, that I did not believe one word of what I was saying. You see there are only twelve of us, and the studio is small while my canvas is very large; and then we can not expect the pupils to remain immovable and pose during two months for me. I do not see how I can do it. I would like to do something else, but what?

Sunday, December 26th.—Potain wishes me to go away; I refused absolutely, and then half laughingly, half seriously, I complained to him of my family. I asked him if angry fits of weeping every day could hurt the throat, and he said, of course it could. I will not go away. Traveling is charming, but not with my family, with their tiresome little bickerings. I know that I should rule them, but they irritate me, and then—no, no. no!

Digitized by Google

Besides, I scarcely cough at all now. Only all this makes me unhappy; I imagine that I can never extricate myself from it. From what? I do not know, but my tears blind me. Do not think that these are tears of disappointment at not being married; no, they are not like other tears. And yet it may be that, but I don't think so.

And then, things around me are so sad, and I can not complain to anyone. My poor aunt leads such an isolated life, we see each other so little; I pass the evenings in reading or playing.

I can no longer speak or write of myself without bursting into tears. It must be that I am ill. Ah, what foolish complaints! Does not everything lead to death?

Why, then, in spite of our reason, in spite of our knowledge that all things end in nothing, do we persist in complaining?

I know that, like everyone else, I am going to die, to be nothing. I weigh the circumstances of life which, whatever they may be, appear miserably vain to me, and, nevertheless, I can not resign myself to death. Life is then a force, it is *something*; it is not a transient state, a duration of time which matters little whether it is passed in a palace or in a cellar; there is then something stronger, truer, than we are able to imagine. Life is not a transient thing, then, simply a period of misery, but it is our dearest possession, our all, in fact.

We say it is nothing because it is not eternal. Ah! fools that we are!

Life is ourselves; it is ours, it is all that we have; how, then, is it possible to say that it is nothing? If this be nothing, tell me what *something* is?

Thursday, December 30th.—I went to see Tony and returned comforted somewhat. He urges me very much to paint the picture ("The Studio"). He says I am perfectly capable of painting it life-size, and it would be very interesting—a good study and a fine painting at the same time. I must not be received through favor, but through merit; if it comes out badly

Digitized by Google

he will tell me so; but he believes that I will succeed quite well, and he finally persuaded me to undertake it. We then spoke of myself in general; we agree on this point, that one's ability in painting is slow to reveal itself; but he says that very frequently it is suddenly demonstrated, and that no one expects any great result after only three years of study; that I wish to go too fast, and that he is convinced that I will succeed; what can I think? I told him so many times not to spare me, and I insisted so strongly that he should be as frank as possible, that I really believe he was sincere; besides, he has no interest in deceiving me; and then, what he has said is not so very wonderful after all. However, I feel somewhat encouraged, and I am ready to paint the picture he desires.

What a kind, honest fellow Tony is; he says that only after ten or twelve years of work have the most gifted achieved any great success; that Bonnat, after seven years of study, amounted to nothing, and that he, himself, worked eight years before he exhibited his first painting. Of course I know all this is true, but as I had determined to win fame before I was twenty, you can imagine my feelings. It is now midnight, and I am beginning to be suspicious. I think Tony expressed too high an opinion of my ability. I wonder if he was setting a trap for me?

Digitized by Google

1881.

Saturday, January 1st.—I gave a corsage bouquet to A— who kissed me twice, and, as we were alone, I asked her how her love affair was progressing, and she told me this: It has now lasted six years without any kind of variation. She recognizes his step on the stairway, and the manner in which he opens the door, and each time her heart beats as fast as it did in the first days. I can understand that; if it were otherwise it would no longer be love. It is said that everything through custom becomes stale and time weakens our feelings, but this is not always the case, and love which changes, or becomes tame, is not true love.

I have a horror of inconstancy. Very few people are happy enough to be able to feel true love, which, even when it is not returned, is eternal. In general we are incapable of feeling such an absorbing sentiment, or other things intervene, and we content ourselves with a fragment of love which is liable to change at any moment; many persons shrug their shoulders when an eternal, unselfish love is spoken of, and it must be confessed that such love is very rare.

True love may not be eternal, but it is always unselfish.

Sunday, January 2d.—I opened "Flamarande" by George Sand, and I found that a lackey relates the whole story; how disgusting! The first twenty lines were enough to make me angry. I am a Republican, and that is just the reason why I can not consider flunkies as equals. A domestic loses certain rights in consenting to serve. It is odious to always mingle with domestics like this George Sand. Notwithstanding my indignation I read "Flamarande," which is the author's master-

Digitized by Google

piece. The servants are in their proper place, and the book is exquisite.

Reading very fast I finished the book, which is charming. I will now read "*Les Deux Freres*," which is the conclusion of the story.

Monday, January 3d.—I finished reading "*Les Deux Freres*" at midnight. It is pretty, but it leaves me nothing to think about. Oh, Balzac!

Julian will not have the partition taken down before Sunday; as it would disturb the pupils during the week. This makes me lose one week. I have left in all only ten weeks, which is not much. And again I think that Tony and Julian induce me to commence the painting, knowing I can not succeed. But what is their object?

Nescio.

Wednesday, January 5th.—Tony and I reached the studio at the same time this morning. I showed him a small sketch, and we conversed about the painting. The room in which I shall work, is very small, even with the wall removed, and, therefore, taking the dimensions of my canvas into consideration, it will be no child's play.

And then that idea of having the same subject done by two persons, creates a sort of rivalry which is very irritating. With all my brave looks, I am very timid, and when A— is there, I am half paralyzed, and know neither how to pose anyone nor anything else; it is very embarrassing, and then it annoys me to have two on the same subject.

Ah! this painting wearies me! Ah! I want to do something else! Ah! these fluctuations in my spirits are horrible! By a word I am raised to heights, or prostrated to the ground, and to keep me from despair, Julian and Tony must pass their lives in praising me. When they give me advice only, without saying anything good or bad of my work, I am miserably dejected.

Friday, January 7th.—I related the meannesses of which I

Digitized by Google

am the victim to all the ladies of the studio, and, as everybody is of the same opinion, it is another proof that I am right. Several of them said that they had believed me to be more independent, and that I had been imposed upon. I admit it, but it is so nice to leave to others the specialty of duplicities and intrigues. I said "to leave" this is not exact, I leave it to them because I know myself to be absolutely incapable of intrigues and duplicities. It is so tiresome, so annoying, in fact, I do not know what to do. And then it is also a satisfaction to know that you are better than others. To be imposed upon, and to know it, why it is a delicious sentiment, it is almost a warrant of honesty, of candor. What is best, is to have a clear conscience, and to see the baseness of others; to see yourself clean, and others foul, even to the prejudice of your now interests; but the harm done one, almost disappears under those conditions, and the more one is victimized, the greater is the enjoyment!

Evidently, at the first unpleasantness, I should say, if things are to be this way, I shall not do your painting! But that would be to overwhelm A— with joy, who would see her efforts crowned with success. That is my only reason for not withdrawing.

I said all this aloud, and added that I would let things go on, convinced that A— will not consent to inconvenience me so horribly. I pretended to believe that it was impossible, and assumed a cheerful expression.

Saturday, January 8th.—I have a real passion for books. I arrange them, count them, look at them; nothing but that pile of old books can rejoice my heart. I stand at a distance to look at them, as I would at a painting. I have about 700 volumes; but, as they are nearly all of a large size, they are equivalent to a much greater number of the ordinary size.

Sunday, January 9th.—Potain refuses to treat me, as I do not follow his prescriptions. Ah! I would love to leave here, to

Digitized by Google

go to Italy, to Palermo. Oh, for the pure sky! the blue sea! the beautiful calm nights!—the thought alone of Italy makes me wild. It is like something very beautiful which fate may yet have in store for me, and for which I am not yet ready. No, it is not that—I do not know how to explain myself. It seems to me like a great happiness which I want to enjoy only when I am free from all preoccupation, all annoyance. When I say to myself, Let us go! I think immediately, No, not yet; I must still struggle, work, and then afterward, I know not when, absolute rest—Italy. I ask myself what there is there to attract me so, but the effect Italy has upon me is bewitching, magical, inconceivable.

Oh, yes, to go away! When Charcot, Potain, and all the others tell me to go, it must be that I am very ill! I feel that the warm air of the South would cure me at once; but it is their fault if I do not go.

Why, then, does not mamma come back? They say it is a whim on my part, but I want her all the same. All is ended. I have another year, perhaps; 1882 is the great date of the dreams of my childhood; it is 1882 that I placed as the culminating point, without knowing exactly what I meant or desired. It may, perhaps, be death. This evening, at the studio, the skeleton was dressed up as Louise Michel, with a red scarf, a cigarette, and a palette knife for a dagger. In me, too, is hidden a skeleton. To that we must all come. Horrible annihilation!

This morning I made a sketch—the flower market of the Madelaine. A pretty Parisian, with a little boy, buying from an old huckster, who stands just outside a shop filled with flowers. I have only to copy what I see; it is very natural, very Parisian, very interesting to do, and perfectly feasible in my studio. And then, all those flowers are ravishing. It is easier than the regular work of the studio, more quickly finished, and it can be done quietly at home. Only—I must know what Tony will say, for Julian "sticks to his shop."

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, January 12th.—All is arranged; I have commenced to make my plans, outlines, etc., and, as I think that A— will not finish her painting, I will make mine half natural size, and with many people in it.

Thursday, January 13th (Russian New Year, January 1st).—I still cough a little and breathe painfully; but there is no notable change, no emaciation, nor paleness. Potain comes no longer; my illness needs but air and sun. Potain is honest and will not stuff me with useless medicine; but I take asses milk and elaterium. I know that one winter in the sun would have cured me; but—I know better than anyone what ails me. My larynx was always easily affected, and continual agitations have aggravated the malady; but then, there is nothing the matter with me except my cough and the trouble with my ears. It does not amount to much after all.

Saturday, January 15th.—Monsieur Cot, who is to alternate with Tony, entered upon his functions to-day. I did not show him my work, although Julian pointed me out to him as the person of whom he had spoken. "It is Mademoiselle who is to paint this," he said, pointing to my large canvas, which was so hard to carry into the studio yesterday.

"Yes, Monsieur, it was I who suggested that subject, and I am to own the picture."

Julian afterward told me that he had spoken of me to Cot, as being a very interesting pupil, etc., and if I had not shown him my work, he knew it was through timidity. All this and much more was said to overcome my dislike to accept advice.

Tony is a strong man, an earnest artist, an academician, a man of recognized authority, and lessons from such men are always excellent. In painting, as in literature, you must first learn the grammar, then your nature will tell you whether you should compose dramas or comic songs. Thus, if Tony were assassinated, I would take Lefebvre, Bonnat, or even Cabanel—which would be painful. Artists of temperament, such as

Digitized by Google

Carolus, Bastien-Lepage, and Henner, force you involuntarily to imitate them, and they say we acquire only the defects of those we copy. As a teacher, I would not like an artist who paints only single figures. I want to see an artist surrounded by a lot of historical paintings. This would give him eminence and dispose me to listen to his advice, although I sometimes prefer a single figure to five or six paintings of thirty figures each.'

Altogether, this Cot seems good-natured enough; his first lesson impressed me. He is fully forty-seven years old, quite thin, and bald. He converses quite pleasantly in the studio. Being strange to us all, he was somewhat timid.

The least interesting face in the world may become so under certain circumstances and surroundings. I have seen the most common-place heads of models become superb—thanks to a hat, cap, or drapery. All this is to tell you modestly, that every evening on my return from the studio, dirty and tired, I bathe, put on a white robe, and drape a scarf of India-muslin and lace about my head, like the old women of Chardin and the little girls of Greuze. This gives me a charming appearance, and I am more beautiful than you could ever imagine me to be. To-night the scarf was rather large and was arranged in the Egyptian fashion, and, I know not how it was, but my face looked *superb*. Generally, this word does not suit my face; but the drapery performed the miracle. It makes me light-hearted once more.

It is a habit now. To remain with my head uncovered in the evening disturbs me, and "my sad thoughts" like to be under shelter. I feel more comfortable and tranquil.

Thursday, January 20th.—Let us speak of agreeable things. I went to see Tony and showed him my rough sketch, which he thought was very well arranged. He gave me advice, encouragement, and his good wishes, for the beginning I am to make to-morrow.

"You have never painted a large painting?"

Digitized by Google

"Never."

"And you know nothing of perspective?"

"Monsieur Ingres knew nothing of it, either."

"He lied when he said so."

"He was jesting, then?"

"Assuredly, you will encounter enormous difficulties; observe well, and have courage, courage!"

Courage! I am overflowing with courage, on my word of honor.

This has raised my spirits and made me cheerful.

Tuesday, January.—This morning I did not hurry myself, but went to breakfast at 11 o'clock with the G—'s, whom I have somewhat neglected lately, after which I did not get to the studio until half-past 1 o'clock, and commenced my painting with the greatest pleasure. From the first stroke we can feel whether we shall do it with ease, or meet with difficulties.

Thanks be to God, I believe all will go well. Mademoiselle de Villevieille and the little Turk posed. I will thus sketch all my figures with the crayon; then, by observing the *ensemble*, the modifications required can be seen. This interests me! I am feeling well and cheerful! The heads in the foreground are from twelve to fourteen centimeters long.

I have never been able to understand how one could give one's life for a beloved being, a perishable being, and all for love.

But I can understand, nevertheless, that we should undergo all sorts of torture and even death, for a principle, for liberty; for something which can ameliorate the condition of men in general.

I should defend all these beautiful things in France as well as in Russia. Country comes only after humanity. Distinctions between nations are, in fact, but shadows, and I always believe in treating all questions with simplicity and broadness of view.

If I do not want to be exiled, it is because it would be useless, and I have a horror of useless sacrifices. It is not

Digitized by Google

cowardly to choose your part in life, and it is only natural to prefer being martyrized like St. Paul than to be one of the 11,000 virgins. I admit frankly, that it would grieve me to be an unknown heroine, but I swear to you—

I stopped suddenly there, I was about to swear before God, and I am not very sure that He exists. I think that without the least fear. God, if He exists, can not be offended with my doubts, which are but an avowal of my ignorance. I would guard myself from denying the existence of God, but I can not sincerely and coldly affirm it. Oh, in the moments I suffer much, I do not reason in this way; I fall on my knees and pray to that God Whose existence at such times I thoroughly believe in.

It seems to me, however, that there must exist a supreme intelligence—but not the God to Whom I am accustomed. But then, what is the use of this supreme intelligence?

But I was going to—yes, swear before God that I would give even the last drop of my blood in the service of some great principle which was dear to me.

I am calm; not a Louise Michel, not a nihilist at all; but if I believed that liberty was seriously threatened, I would be the most furious of all.

Saturday, January 22d.—It is cold; everything is covered with snow; I go out before 8 o'clock every morning.

The painting interests me. Cot has seen it, but has said only insignificant things, such as, "that looks well, not bad," and then words of encouragement. It is true that this is the first time that I have been corrected. After Cot had gone, Tony arrived. I had written to him and it was very amiable of him to come. Tony thinks there is nothing to be changed, that nothing clashes, that it is going on quite well, that it may be very interesting, and there is nothing but to continue as I have begun. Julian also came, and was very amiable. I see that my work interests him, as he comes to look at it quite frequently, and encourages me by giving me good advice.

Digitized by Google

All goes so well that I can scarcely believe it. Here are two months before me of forgetfulness, of amusement, of happiness.

After which, I will go to Italy, until the opening of the *Salon.* Three and a half months of a happy life; it seems too good to be true.

Wednesday, January 26th.—Tuesday, on my return from the studio, I was feverish and I remained until 7 o'clock without lights, shivering in an arm-chair, half asleep and always with the painting before my eyes, as it has been every night for the last week. You know that A— has installed herself at the other extremity of the studio and is doing my painting, reversed, and as her most fervent desire is to surpass me, she thinks she can succeed by taking measurements all the time; and her outstretched arm, her hand holding the crayon, is ever before my eyes like a dark line drawn on my painting.

As I took no nourishment except a little milk, I passed a horrible night. I could not sleep, for my alarm-clock kept waking me, but the picture was always before me, and I was continually working on it in my imagination; but I was doing the contrary of what I should, forced by a supernatural will to efface what was well done. Oh, it was exasperating! and I could not remain calm. I was in a terrible state of agitation, trying to believe that I was dreaming, but no. But, then, it must be delirium, I said to myself. It must have been, and now that I know what it was, I would not be disturbed, if I were not so fatigued, body and soul.

But what is strange is that, in my delirium, I awaited Julian to have his advice on a figure that I changed.

Yesterday he came and found that I had been wrong. I had effaced all that was good before the dream.

Yesterday, in the evening, by a curious phenomena, I could hear well, very well.

I am worn out.

Digitized by Google

Monday, January 31st.—Julian and Tony (Julian especially, as he has seen it oftener) are pleased with my painting, and have told me so several times. And I was pleased with it myself, and much exalted. Now I am once more fallen, I am no longer satisfied with my composition, although I repeat to myself continually that Tony has seen it twice, and said "that it was well arranged, interesting, and that nothing should be changed." I have lost confidence. Julian has also told me to change nothing. In fact, everybody finds it good, especially a group in the background, which is very pretty, but I am not satisfied. I see it in a different light. I can no longer think of modifications; besides it is too late.

It is, all the same, very curious that so many things displease me in this painting, and displease neither Julian nor Tony. It must be that they think I can do no better, and will not let me grow discouraged by looking for difficulties when there are none.

Thursday, February 3d.—I have before my eyes the portraits of my father and of my mother, taken when they were betrothed. I have hung them on the wall as "documents." According to Zola, and other philosophers more eminent, we must see the cause to understand the effect. I was born of a mother exceedingly beautiful, young, and healthy, with brown hair and eyes, and a dazzling complexion; and of a father, blonde, pale, and of delicate health, himself the son of a very robust father and a sickly mother who died young, and brother to four sisters who were more or less hunchbacked from birth. Grandpapa and grandmamma had good constitutions and had nine children, all of good health, and some of them beautiful, for instance, mamma and Uncle Etienne.

The sickly father of the illustrious product which occupies our attention has become strong and healthy, and the mother, once dazzling with health and youth, has become weak and nervous, thanks to the horrible existence which she has had to endure.

Digitized by Google

I finished "*L'Assommoir*" day before yesterday; it made me almost ill, and, so much was I struck by the truth of the book that I seemed to live and converse with its characters.

I was indignant to live and eat while these horrors were passing around me, in a lower sphere. All should read this book; everyone would be better for it.

But I am calmed, the more so that I, by myself alone, could do no possible good. Who can fail to be impressed with the social questions of the day?

Oh, yes, everyone should do what he can; but we call the socialists scoundrels and fools; it can not be denied that socialistic ideas are often Utopian. What can I do? I am not even capable of writing a newspaper article!

Monday, February 9th.—My painting, for an instant delayed because of the difficulty in placing one of the figures, goes on again; I feel as light as a feather.

At 1 o'clock, Villevieille and Brisbane, my principal models, who are infinitely obliging, came with me to the Mirlitons. Either I was not in a critical humor, or my eyes have opened, or Carolus is improving, for I was dazzled by his portrait—the woman with a little girl in red; hitherto I have not cared for Carolus, his child in red and his woman in blue at the last *Salon* having disgusted me. But the two portraits of to-day are the most beautiful that can be imagined. I still prefer the woman and child, to the woman alone, who is old and made up.

The woman with the child is dazzling. She is not pretty, but a fine woman, sympathetic, maternal, in a plum-colored dress, made in the Louis XIII. style, the breast uncovered and of a brilliant whiteness; the light falls full on the blonde head of the child, and is lost in the right hand of the woman, which is on the child's shoulder; the left hand holds a fan, and falls carelessly to the side; pearls in her hair and on her arms; the hands are not quite complete; and the bottom of the portrait is rather carelessly done, to give prominence to the faces and the breast; it is a spot of superb light on a ground

Digitized by Google

of moss green. And how superbly it is treated! It is so broad and so true to nature.

I prefer a picture like this to the smoked and dead canvases of the galleries. My favorite, Bastien-Lepage, exhibits a portrait of the Prince of Wales, in Henry IV. costume, with the Thames and the English fleet for background; the background recalls that of the Joconde in its tone. The face is a brutal one, and the portrait might easily be mistaken for a Holbein. I don't like it. Why imitate another's style? If one is making a copy, all well and good, but this is not a copy; it is really a decided success as an imitation. I do not envy that kind of a success, however.

Oh, if I could paint like Carolus Duran! This is the first time that I have seen anything that I coveted; anything in the way of painting that I would like to own myself. After that, everything seemed to me shabby, dry, and dirty.

Saturday, February 12th.—I had my painting placed in perspective, and behold, that changes everything! I did not look at my subject in the right way; I ought to have supposed myself six meters away; for instance, my eyes saw the ladder behind Mademoiselle de Villevieille's head, and the proper perspective requires it to be placed more to the left. I do not understand how we can make what we do not see. Besides, when we sketch accurately, we should not make faults of perspective; to paint a temple, a colonnade, or things of that sort, *perspecteurs* are required; but not for a simple studio with women!

I have lost four or five days with all this; finally, Tony came and gave me an explanation.

Use the perspective if it suits your arrangements; but if it disturbs the composition, then it will not do; you must use your own judgment in such cases.

But then, how can we make a thing false, when we make exactly what we see?

Tony persists in being satisfied, and tells me to go on.

Digitized by Google

I am enraptured.

At noon, the maid came running in with a very red face. Monsieur Julian had been decorated. Everyone was delighted; we were triumphant, and A—, Neuvéglise, and I ran and ordered a beautiful basket of flowers with a big red bow, from Vaillant-Roseau. Vaillant-Roseau is not an ordinary florist, but a refined artist; 150 francs was not too much.

We placed a card on it inscribed thus:

"To Monsieur Julian, from the ladies' studio of the Panorama passage."

Villevieille returned at 3 o'clock expressly to congratulate the master; he came up with his ribbon, and I had the pleasure of seeing for the first time in my life, an absolutely happy man. He admitted it himself, saying, "There are, perhaps, people who wish for something; I, at the present moment, desire nothing more in the world!"

Then Villevieille and I went down into the studio of the honored director to see the flowers; joy, congratulations, and even a little emotion! He spoke of his aged mother, whom he fears to overcome in suddenly announcing the news. Then of an old uncle who will weep like a child. "Imagine then, it is a village down there! You see the effect! A poor little peasant who left the place with nothing—Chevalier of the Legion of Honor!"

He was very gentle in speaking of his father and his family; we seemed ourselves like a family party. Under the inspiration of emotion, the least sympathetic of the pupils spoke of offering a bronze, or something of that sort, as a souvenir of the great occasion.

Then came other pupils, my aunt, Neuvéglise, etc. Julian was enraptured with the flowers and the ribbon bow. In short, this lasted until half-past 5 o'clock.

Nonsense apart, this will give an altogether different stamp to the studio, and since Father Rudolphe is so happy, it will make him better tempered.

Digitized by Google

Sunday, February 13th.—Here is a very tender letter from my mother:

"GRAND HOTEL, KARKOFF, January 27th.

"My adored angel, my darling child, Moussia, if you knew how unhappy I am without you, especially as I am uneasy about your health, and how I long to leave here as soon as possible!

"You, who are my pride, my glory, my happiness, my joy!!! If you could imagine the sufferings I undergo without you! Your letter, written to Madame Anitskoff, is in my hands. Like a lover, I read it over and over, and wet it with my tears. I kiss your little hands and your little feet, and I pray God that I may do so in reality, as soon as possible.

"I embrace our dear aunt tenderly.

"M. B."

Monday, February 14th.—I painted the head of Alice Brisbane in two hours' time, and Julian told me to leave it so; and sometimes we are eight days in making something worthless. A portion of the corsage and apron was also painted.

The *perspecteur* came and preached to me, for twenty-five minutes, the necessity of submitting myself to his infallible rules. How about Tony's opinions, then, and my own?

This man can not be mistaken, since these are fixed rules; but Tony—but I? I know nothing of it, but I must not go too deeply into the subject, that I may not fatigue myself just when I require so much liberty of mind to quietly make the masterpiece.

But I think the mathematician is right.

Friday, February 18th.—Such confusion! The sketches were mixed, and half the competition was not judged. Great tumult! Julian came up and began to explain, I know not what. I, who was thinking of other things, leaning on the door, yawned formidably, which signified clearly: Ah! how stupid all this is! Julian, already exasperated, turned to me, saying, if this did not interest me, I could go home. I could find nothing to reply, as I did not do it purposely, and had not the least intention of being impolite.

It is now two days since the illustrious artist has corrected

Digitized by Google

me, which makes the relations in the studio somewhat strained, and it annoys me!

Saturday, February 19th.—Tony tells me everything is going well. After giving me a good lesson, he corrected A—, but said very little to her, and was constrained. I believe he advised her to change some figures, which did not suit him.

She turned quite red, and, instead of conversing with him, as usual, she remained in her place and continued her work, while that angel, Tony, returned to examine my painting, gave me advice and encouragement, and repeated several times that I was doing well.

I was so enraptured that I forgot the coldness of Julian, although it still troubled me.

For ten days I have done nothing but dream of grandpapa, mamma, my family—

And then, most always, I dream of the people that I am to see the next day, or the dream continues the next night, and I never sleep without dreams.

Tuesday, February 22d.—I have made my peace with Julian. I said to him: "Monsieur Julian, ah! why do you keep up a grudge against me for a thing I did not do purposely? Do come and correct me!" And he came, looking very dignified, saying, that since I acknowledged being in the wrong, he would overlook it. I did not reply, because I am not in the wrong, but I detest discord, and it interferes with my painting.

Thursday, March 3d.—I am very ill. I cough very much, breathe with difficulty, and there is a sinister rattling in my throat. I believe it is called phthisis laryngitis.

I opened lately the New Testament, neglected for some time past, and twice, in the space of a few days, I have been struck by the appropriateness with which the lines my eye happened to fall upon answered my thoughts. I pray again to Christ. I have returned to the Virgin; to miracles, after having been a deist—after days of absolute atheism. But

Digitized by Google

the religion of Christ, according to His own words, resembles but little your Catholicism, or our own orthodoxy, which I abstain from following, limiting myself to following the precepts of Christ, without embarrassing myself with allegories, which pass for realities, superstitions, and various absurdities, introduced later into religion, by men, for political or other motives.

Wednesday, March 16th.—Tony found many things that were very good, and others that were good. In a word, it is not bad. After all, I am not very well satisfied.

Bojidar, who has returned from Nice, will look after the transportation of the painting.

Friday, March 18th.—I have finished the painting, save a little retouching.

Julian finds that it has improved enormously in the last week, and it is now good.

Tony has not seen the change in the center. The three principal figures, and others, and some hands in the background have been repainted and changed.

I feel myself that it is better now. We shall see to-morrow what Tony will say.

There are in all sixteen persons, and the skeleton makes seventeen.

Saturday, March 19th.—Ah, well, I am not satisfied. Tony, as before, finds many places that are good, but the whole is not worthy of compliment. He explained, at length, what should be done, and gave a few strokes of the brush, which I afterward effaced.

At half-past 4 Julian came. This interrupted my work, and we conversed. I had commenced at a quarter to 8. I was tired, the more so for not having any "very wells" from Tony.

Ah! I know it well. It is cheerful and well-toned, but there is an enormous want of knowledge.

Julian declares that he is furious to have given me such an extended subject for my first painting. "Ah! if it were only

Digitized by Google

your second!" Ah, yes. "Well, Monsieur, let us leave it for next year."

On hearing this, he looked at me with eyes glittering with the hope of finding me capable of renouncing the vain satisfaction of exhibiting an incomplete and mediocre thing. He would be charmed if I renounced it; I also, but the others! my friends? They would think that what I had done had been found too bad by the professors; that I was incapable of a painting; finally, that I had been rejected at the *Salon*.

Question: Have I done all that I could, save a few little things? Yes, certainly; but I have found myself face to face with things absolutely unknown to me, and which I did not suspect. However, I have learned much.

Julian says that I have made a great effort, that it is not bad, that it is interesting; but when I think what it might have been, it is enough to make me tear my hair. Ah, how I wish this painting was torn, that I might not be forced to exhibit it. For I am forced to it by a foolish vanity already punished, because I fear the indifference of the public and the jests of the men down-stairs. It would not be precisely jesting, but they will say: "Ah, well, the strongest of your women is not very strong."

Ah, heavens! this should all have been foreseen. Julian should have known it! But he says it is because I have overloaded my canvas; if I had continued to paint as I began, all would have been well! and there is in it the academy figure of the model, a little ten-year-old boy. No, had I done this as the weekly study I should have scratched it all; it is bad, and moreover the drawing is of very ordinary merit, without character and absolutely unworthy of me; it is the worst of paintings.

Ah! it is annoying; but what is to be done?

Sunday, March 20th.—It was very amusing at the *Palais de l'Industrie;* the crowd howled and passed remarks on the unfortunate canvases that came in. Bojidar had entered, and I had some difficulty in being recognized as an artist; finally

Digitized by Google

I effected an entrance; I looked very elegant and I was stared at by my dear fellow-artists; we found ourselves with the eternal Bojidar, and I then saw a few paintings.

Mine appeared quite small, although it is about two feet and a half in height by nearly four feet in width. A group of men were standing before it; I ran away, not to hear their remarks, and besides, it seemed to me that they knew it was I who had painted it.

I spoke seriously to Julian and explained to him my feelings. I do not want him to believe me capable of foolish vanity; no, I do not say this to boast, and it will not break my heart; do not confound me with nervous women, no!

In short, he understands very well and so do I. He said I would be honorably received, and even have some success; but not what we had dreamed of. The men from down-stairs will not stand before the painting and exclaim: "What! was this done by a woman?" Finally, I proposed an apparent accident to the picture to save my self-respect, but he will not hear of it. He had expected a success; he admits that his expectations have not been fully realized, but that it may do. And under those conditions I exhibit!

Alas, yes! I understand perfectly that he encourages me, because he does not believe that I am sensible; notwithstanding my declarations he believes me an ordinary woman, and thinks that by telling me the pure truth, he would wound me.

However, I have told all! It is that I am an earnest pupil, and need not exhibit to have lessons; I exhibit through vanity; therefore, if it is bad, it does not matter. At last all is over; I have delivered the painting; but how anxious I shall be until after the first of May. If I only have a good number!

Oh, I will paint torsos and make rough sketches! You shall see!

Thursday, March 24th.—I discovered a pot of tar under my bed. It was a kindness on the part of Rosalie to benefit my

Digitized by Google

health. She placed it there by the advice of a fortune-teller! My family thought this mark of affection on the part of a servant very touching; mamma was deeply affected. I threw a pail of water on the carpet under the bed, broke a window-pane, and slept in my study out of rage.

It is like that bore of warm clothing!

My family imagine that I have a particular interest in freezing myself, and this provokes me to such a point that I do not half cover myself to prove the uselessness of their continual nagging. Oh, those people make me wild with rage!

Tuesday, March 29th.—I learned at the studio that Breslau's picture has already been accepted, and I have heard nothing of my painting. I worked until noon, and then we went for a drive, which appeared atrociously long to me.

I have reasoned and reasoned with myself, and all I have gained are a fever and a headache, which are hidden under a calm exterior, it is true.

But that stupid Rosalie asked the ladies at the studio for money to send that message, in which I depicted my uneasiness to Tony, and the ladies read the message; how terrible it is now, I can neither appear at the studio nor remain here. Oh, my family!

I do not wish anyone to suffer the pangs I suffer, whoever it may be.

Wednesday, March 30th.—I pretended to sleep until 10 o'clock, as an excuse not to go to the studio, and I am very miserable.

Here is Julian's reply. It calms me a little. Think of it! No, you can never imagine what the refusal of the painting would be to me! It would be no longer—I would have only myself to complain of. And I do not know which is the most frightful—to be yourself guilty of your misfortune, or to suffer because of others. Ah! this blow would strike me to the heart. I can not imagine what I should do. But then I must try to have hope.

Digitized by Google

Friday, April 1st.—I am queen, and it is no April-fool joke. Julian came after midnight, last night, to tell me himself, on his way from Lefebvre's. We had punch at the studio to-day. Bojidar, without being requested, obtained information from Tidière (a young man from down-stairs), and ascertained that I had number two. That is far more than I expected.

Sunday, April 3d.—Never has Patti sung with more animation than yesterday; her voice has such intensity, such freshness, such magnificence! The *bolero* in the "Sicilian Vespers" was encored. Heavens, what a beautiful voice I had! It was powerful, dramatic, and inspiring; it made one tremble with emotion. And now, it is nothing, not even enough to speak of!

Am I, then, incurable? I am young. I might perhaps—

Patti does not move me at all, but she can bring tears of astonishment to my eyes; it is a veritable pyrotechnical exhibition; yesterday I was positively thrilled for a moment when she burst into a shower of notes, so pure, so high, of such delicacy!

Tuesday, April 5th.—Surprise! My father has come. They sent for me at the studio, and I found him in the dining-room with mamma, who showed much affection for him. Dina and Saint-Amand were enraptured by the sight of this conjugal happiness.

We went out together—Monsieur, Madame, and Baby. We visited the stores for Monsieur; then we went to the Bois and stopped for an instant at the Karageorgevitch.

He comes undoubtedly to see mamma; but I know nothing yet; we are too much excited.

Wednesday, April 6th.—My father detained me until 9 o'clock, insisting that I should not go to work; but my torso interested me too much, and I did not see the august family again until dinner, after which they went to the theatre and I remained alone.

My father does not understand how one can wish to be an

Digitized by Google

artist, or how fame can be won in such a career. At times I think he only pretends to have such ideas.

Saturday, April 23d.—I brought B—'s portrait to Tony; he thinks it very well arranged; then, after a certain amount of advice, he said it was astonishingly well done for one who had worked so little as I.

"Yes, it is astonishingly good, and if you continue to work like—"

But I interrupted him, saying that I should work still more, all that I possibly can.

I am delighted that it is astonishingly good; be it so! I do not then make merely tolerable progress. Ah! I breathe once more; I am already classed among the creditable pupils. Ah, mercy, what luck!

The portrait is pretty. B— is dressed in a puckered, white cambric dress; puffed, short sleeves; a pink ribbon tied around her figure below the bosom; and a straw-colored shawl about her, covering her arms; the left hand holds a rose carelessly; the head is full face, half in the shadow and half in the light. Neutral background, greenish gray, warm, and transparent. Do not imagine that I believe myself talented; not yet; but it is a pretty arrangement, the woman is pretty, and it is astonishingly good for one who has worked for so short a time.

Sunday, May 1st.—Alexis came early, he had a ticket for two; therefore, as I had one, also, four of us could go—Monsieur, Madame, Alexis, and myself. I was not very well satisfied with my dress—a costume of gray woolen, very dark, and a black hat, elegant, but quite common-place. We immediately found my work, which is in the first room to the left of the room of honor, in the second row. I was delighted with the place; and much astonished to see how well the painting appeared. It is not very good, but I expected a veritable horror, and, on the contrary, it is quite pleasing.

But, through an error, my name was omitted from the catalogue (I called attention to it and it will be rectified). We

Digitized by Google

could not see much in this first day, we were in such haste to see everything at once. Alexis and I left the family somewhat behind, to run to the right and left; finally, we lost sight of them altogether, and I took his arm for a little while. I felt free; I came and went and had no fear. We met a crowd of acquaintances and I received a great many compliments which did not appear forced. It was natural; people who know nothing about the matter, see quite a large painting with many persons in it, and they think it quite a fine thing.

A week ago I gave 1,000 francs to the poor. No one knows of it. I went to the principal office and quickly run out again without listening to their thanks. The administrator must have thought that I had stolen the money in order to give it away. Heaven has already returned it to me many fold!

Abbema, who was walking with Bojidar, sent word that she was pleased with my painting, that it is virile, and interesting, etc. A few minutes afterward we met, and were introduced to the celebrated friend of Sarah Bernhardt.

She is a nice girl and I appreciated her praises, the more so as Bojidar announced to me that she had just quarreled with B—, having told him that he is declining, and that she does not like his paintings this year.

We breakfasted there; in all, six hours among objects of art. I will say nothing about the paintings, I will only say here that I think highly of Breslau's painting; great qualities; but the drawing is bad, and the color too thickly laid on; fingers like birds' claws, deformed noses, and such nails, and such hardness of tone, and then, extravagant shadings; in a word, it is an impressionist picture, and Bastien-Lepage is the one she imitates.

Where have you ever seen such coloring and such high perspective in nature?

But no matter, there is some good in it, and those three heads placed between Wolff's portrait and Bastien-Lepage's "Mendicant," attract attention.

Digitized by Google

Friday, May 6th.—This morning I went to the *Salon*, where Julian introduced me to Lefebvre, who said there was much merit in my painting—I am a very little girl!

At home, they are continually talking of the changes which are to occur. They all annoy me so! My father sometimes has absurd ideas. He does not believe in them, but he persists in them; he says, for instance, that all depends on my consent to pass the summer in Russia. "It will show," said he, "that you do not live apart from your family."

Have I ever done so? This knack of always making me the pivot on which everything moves, offends me greatly. Moreover, I have had enough of the subject; I can not say a word about it without bursting into tears. They either do not wish, or can do, nothing! Ah! well, I will leave all to chance. But at least I will not travel, I will remain quietly (!!!) at home, and I can grieve in my arm-chair where I am physically well.

Oh, this dreadful lassitude! Should I feel this way at my age? Is it not enough to cripple a character?

And that is what grieves me. If ever I meet with any good fortune and can lead a happy existence, shall I be able to enjoy it? Can I take advantage of what will come? I believe I do not see things as others do, and that—but this is enough.

And at night, worn out and half asleep, divine harmonies float through my head—They come and go. I listen to them as to an orchestra, the melody of which is wrought out within me and in spite of me.

Saturday, May 7th.—My father wishes to go to-morrow and mamma is to go with him. This unsettles everything.

And I, shall I go? Why remain? I can study there in the open air and we shall return for Biarritz.

Besides, they say Ems would do me good—ah, all is indifferent to me. There is nothing left for me in this world.

Sunday, May 8th.—Now, I am almost happy to see that my

Digitized by Google

health is affected, because heaven will not give me any happiness.

And when I am totally wrecked, everything will change, perhaps, but then it will be too late.

Each one for himself, it is true; but then my family affect to love me so, and they do nothing. I am no longer anything, and there is a veil between myself and the rest of the world. If we only knew what there is on the other side, but we do not; however, it is that curiosity about it all which will make death less frightful to me.

I cry out ten times a day that I want to die, but that is simply a sort of despair. We say that we want to die, and it is not true; it is a way of saying that life is horrible; but we want to live, notwithstanding, and in spite of it all, especially at my age. Moreover, do not be disturbed, I shall still last some time. No one is to be blamed, it is God's will.

Sunday, May 15th.—However, in spite of everything, I will go to Russia, if they will wait a week for me. It would be terrible for me to be present at the distribution of prizes. That is a very great sorrow which no one knows of except Julian. I go away on that account. I went, *incognito*, to consult a great doctor, C—. My ears are not incurable, the right lung is affected and has been for a long time, and my throat is in a bad condition. I asked him in such terms that—after a thorough examination—he had to tell me the truth.

I must go to Allevard and submit to a course of treatment. Well, I will go on my return from Russia, and from there to Biarritz. I will work in the country. I will study in the open air, that will do me good. I write all this filled with anger.

But here at home the situation is tearful. On one side, mamma is grieved to go, and I am overpowered by the thought of remaining with my aunt.

And on the other side, my aunt, who has only us, only me, in the world, says nothing, but is wounded to the heart to see that I should suffer in remaining with her.

Digitized by Google

This is beyond my strength. I remain all day with my teeth firmly set that I may not weep, a choking in my throat, buzzing in my ears, and a queer sensation as if the bones would pierce the flesh, which is growing less. And that poor aunt who wishes me to be cheerful and talkative, and to remain with her. I say to you it is beyond my strength; that I believe in nothing, and yet believe all possible.

To remain or to go, matters not to me; but I think if I were to go, they would not stay there so long. After all, I do not know. It is the mention of the medal to Breslau which makes me want to go away. Ah! I have luck in nothing! I must then die miserable. I, who believed and prayed so much—Well, after the most affecting scenes in the world, the departure is fixed for Saturday.

Monday, May 16th.—I went to see Julian and we had a long and serious conversation. He says it is a folly for me to go to Russia. "The doctors send you to the South and you go to the North." He said such wise and sensible things to me that I am still more undecided. And that I may not think it is a question of shop, he advises me to go outside of Paris, to work in the country where it will be warm and where I will have plenty of air and sunshine all day. I must then make a large landscape with figures during the summer, and a studio painting in the winter; that will give me two very different subjects.

He does not wish me to walk in the footsteps of anyone, neither Bastien nor another (meaning Breslau); I am one of those who must retain their individuality. In short, he thinks well of me and always gives excellent advice, good and encouraging words. And very severe withal; therefore I am obedient. I open my heart to him and I believe he is flattered.

But then, to be able to paint well, I must take care of myself. I know that well. Julian squarely advises me not to go to Russia although it would please my family. "Your family will afterward regret it." He said the same to mamma at

Digitized by Google

the risk of angering her, when she came for me. The whole thing troubles me! Ah! I am not happy—but I will take care of myself; I will leave for Allevard, to remain five weeks; that will take me into July. Then I will pass a month in the forest of Fontainbleau—no, I will remain in Paris until June 15th; on the 15th I will go to Allevard until July 20th, then a month at Fontainbleau, frequently coming to Paris to show my studies; about August 20th, return, prepare my clothing, and reach Biarritz on September 1st; after one month of Biarritz, return here and work, at the same time taking care of myself.

And hang Russia!

Friday, May 20th.—In two words I have begun to hesitate again! Potain came, and I counted on him to save me from going to Russia without vexing my father too much. Good, I need not go.

But it was Bojidar who brought the fatal word: "The committee examined the *Salon* to-day and greatly admired Breslau's painting."

Oh, misery! The tears which had already been flowing now poured in torrents. My father and mother thought that I was grieved by what Potain said, and I could not admit the truth, but wept incessantly; no wry face or sobs, but big silent tears in profusion, which fell like a summer rain without leaving many traces on my face.

In fact, Potain has not said much of anything new, and he has given me the means of remaining here; but it is Breslau's painting! That is terrible! In short, what can I say? One day!—I requested Potain to exaggerate my state and to say, simply, to my family, that the right lung was affected, that my father might not be vexed if I remained.

And here they are both in the deepest grief, walking on tiptoes. Ah, misery! Their consideration for me wounds me; their concessions exasperate me—and no point of support! What shall I grasp at? Ah! painting is a simple farce! You know, in moments of anxiety, we are never despairing when

Digitized by Google

we can see a luminous point in the horizon. I consoled myself, saying: Wait a little, painting will save me. Now I doubt everything. I believe neither in Tony nor in Julian.

Is it by shedding tears that I hope to learn how to paint well?

Monday, May 23d.—At last everything was packed and we went to the station. Then, at the moment of departure, my hesitation took possession of the others; I began to weep and mamma with me, and then Dina and my aunt; and my father asked what was to be done. I answered with tears; the bell rang, we ran to the carriage, for which they had taken no ticket for me, and they entered an ordinary compartment (which I would not do). At last, however, I tried to enter, but the door was closed. I had no ticket and they left without even saying good-bye. You see we abuse and say we detest one another, but when it comes to separation we forget everything. On one side mamma, on the other side my aunt, and in the middle my father. He must be furious although he behaved very well; but this useless journey, this loss of time, and then I know not what more. I wept to go, and I weep to remain. Breslau has but little effect on me, but in short— I no longer have any ideas, but I really believe that here I can take better care of myself, and then I ought to lose no time.

Tuesday, May 24th.—I am in despair because I did not go.

I have gratuitously offended my father and I remain here; my summer will be spoiled, anyhow, because I must go to the springs at the end of June. Instead, then, of passing three weeks here, to witness the conferring of the medal on Breslau, to remain shut up, sad, languishing in this Paris where it is suffocating, I should have been in the country, and I really need a change for the sake of both my health and my spirits. Oh, I am an idiot! O— cries and implores me to remain, believing this journey would be my grave, and that the terrible Monsieur Bashkirtseff would keep me there forever. What stupidities! And I, who am enough softened—enough what-

Digitized by Google

ever you wish—to allow myself to be influenced! I shall telegraph to Berlin for them to wait for me there.

Berlin, Wednesday, May 25th.—I left yesterday; my aunt, who saw I was sad at remaining in Paris, did not weep, fearing that I should reproach her with influencing me by her tears, but she was broken-hearted and believes she will never see me again. The poor woman who worships mamma, adores me doubly on that account, although I am as disagreeable as can be. I even ask myself how it is possible for me to recompense so badly her sublime devotion. From the time of my birth, grandmamma accustomed her to look upon me as a paragon; now, whatever I may do, all she thinks of is my welfare. I do not even have to speak, she watches my fancies, and the more so because, knowing that I am very ill and unhappy, she can do nothing but make my material life as agreeable as possible.

I am ill and my poor family, who exaggerate everything, believe that the disease may prove fatal.

Moreover, I have always had the consolation of seeing the most beautiful fruits, the earliest flowers on the table with my favorite dishes, each time I have had an ostensible annoyance. These attentions may appear small, but there is something touching in them, and I can not appear kind; poor aunt has noticed, without any hint from me, that I avoid as much as possible all human beings; therefore, having seen that the supper is prepared, she slips away and leaves me alone with my book. When there are three or four persons of the family present, I suffer their company and talk with them; but with one alone, I become wearied and I remain sulky, while reproaching myself with showing so little tenderness to a woman so devoted and good—for the women of my family are very good—my poor aunt on that score is an angel.

I left Paris yesterday.

I went to see Tony who is very ill, and I left a letter of thanks for him; then to Julian's, who had gone out. He might,

Digitized by Google

perhaps, have made me change my mind and remain, and I had to go. For the last week at home we have not dared look at each other for fear of bursting into tears, and when I remained alone, I wept continually, while feeling that it was cruel to my aunt. But she must have seen that I wept as much when I thought of leaving her. She believes I do not love her at all, and when I think of the life of sacrifice of this heroic creature, I am melted to tears; she has not even the consolation of being loved as a good aunt! However, I love no one better.

At last I am in Berlin; my family and Gabriel were at the station to meet me, and we dined together.

What is the most horrible of all is my deafness. It is the hardest thing I have ever had to bear. I now dread everything I once desired, and it is a frightful situation for me. Now that I have more experience, that I commence, perhaps, to show some talent, that I know better how to take advantage of things, it seems to me that the world would be mine if I could hear as before. And the doctors whom I have consulted told me that in my disease this scarcely happens once in a thousand cases. "Be reassured, you will not become deaf because of your larynx; that happens rarely!" and yet it has happened to me. You can not imagine how much dissimulation, what continual tension it requires to try to hide this odious infirmity; I succeed with those who have known me before, and who seldom see me now; but at the studio, for instance, they know all about it.

And how much it affects the intelligence! How is it possible to be quick or witty?

Ah! all is over!

Faskorr (near Kieff), Thursday, May 26th.—I needed this long journey; the plain, the plain everywhere. It is very beautiful; I am wild over the Steppes—as novelties—it is almost the infinite; when there are forests or villages, it is not the same. What charms me especially is the pleasant and amiable look of all the employés, even the lowest of them, as

Digitized by Google

soon as you enter Russia; the people at the custom house converse as if they knew you. I have already had eighty-six hours of railway travel, and I have still thirty more to endure. Such distances make one dizzy!

Gavronzy, Sunday, May 29th.—Last night we arrived at Poltava. I counted much on the joys of the welcome we would receive, a good warm supper, etc.

Paul and Alexander came alone to meet us, and had not even engaged our rooms at the hotel, thinking we were going directly to the country. Horrible!

Paul has become frightfully stout.

This morning came Kapitanenko, Wolkovisky, etc. A new caller also, Lihopay, quite passable and well-bred. My father was very happy, but somewhat confused to see the sad effect the country has upon me after five years' absence. I do not try to dissimulate, and now that I am more familiar with my father, I do not flatter him.

It was cold, the roads were frightfully muddy, and Jews everywhere. The whole country is in a state of siege, and sinister rumors are heard. Poor country!

We have arrived in the country—

The fields are still inundated by the river, mud-puddles, and pools of water everywhere, fresh grass, lilacs in bloom; but it is a valley and I fear it will be damp. Fine way of taking care of myself! It is mortally gloomy. I opened the piano and improvised something mournful. Coco howled dismally. I felt terribly sad, and I formed the project of leaving to-morrow.

They served a soup which smelled of onions; I left the dining-room. The princess and Paul's wife were somewhat amazed. Paul's wife is quite pretty, superb black hair, a beautiful complexion, and a good figure; a very nice little woman on the whole.

I tried to be like everybody else, but did not succeed; unpacking cheered me somewhat. But I am not what I

Digitized by Google

should be, and with reason. I must take care of myself, and how can I do so in the midst of all this humidity? Ah, Julian was right!

Mamma has brought me all the journals that speak of me. What was my despair in Paris is my joy here.

Wednesday, June 1st.—Madame Gorpintchenko has arrived; Michel has departed.

It is beautiful weather, and the lilacs are in bloom; the spring is adorable, but too cool for my wretched carcass.

I did not bring any canvas, and can not find here what I want.

Saturday, June 4th.—Julian writes that Tony Robert-Fleury caught cold while driving from his mother's house in an open carriage, and he has been between life and death ever since. He mourns for him as if he were already dead. Is it not atrocious enough, not to speak of his father, who is eighty-five years old, and his mother, whom poor Tony feared so much to lose?

Sunday, June 5th.—I have telegraphed to Julian to obtain news of Tony, and I am anxious.

I remained out-doors all day and made studies. The weather is very beautiful. I can not conceive the possibility that this man, still so young, can die—although he has changed very much in the last six months.

Monday, June 6th (May 25th).—Tony is out of danger! I am enraptured. Rosalie burst into tears, saying that if he had died it would have made me ill; this is a little exaggerated, but she is a good girl. At the same time as the dispatch, came a letter from Julian, giving the good news.

This is what Zola says of Jules Vallès: "A sensitiveness hidden for fear of ridicule, a brutality often intended, and above all, the passion of life, of human bustle, and you have all his nature; and he is also very lively, 'hoaxing' continually, perhaps in fear of being hoaxed, and hiding his tears under a ferocious irony." I think that resembles me. But it seems so stupid to pretend to know one's own nature.

Digitized by Google

Monday, June 13th (*1st*).—I have commenced a peasant-girl, life-size, standing, leaning against a hedge weaved with dry branches, like a basket.

Straw and boards have been placed on the ground to preserve me from the dampness, and they have erected a little pavilion for me with two rooms in it, so I am very comfortable. Mamma, Paul, Nini, papa, Michel, Dina, and Sperandio spent a part of the day there.

Monday, June 27th (*15th*).—I have been working since—this is the thirteenth day, for the rain has made me lose several days. It is almost finished, I intend to do the head over again for the third time, if I have time.

Paul and his wife have gone to visit one of mamma's properties; Monsieur and Madame are at Poltava. We are four left: The princess, Dina, Sperandio, and I. The rain obliged us to seek shelter in the pavilion ten times (a true mountebank carriage), and now that we have come into the house, it is beautiful; I lost one hour. Day before yesterday, I wanted to destroy my canvas; since yesterday, I am in a fever to work.

I have made the rough sketch of one of my paintings for the *Salon*. The subject enchants me, and I am burning with impatience to begin it.

Wednesday, July 6th (*June 24th*).—I have finished my painting, which is better than anything I have done before, especially the head, which I have done over three times. But having sketched somewhat carelessly, the arm is a little short, and there is some awkwardness in the pose. Now, these defects are unpardonable in me, as I know perfectly well how to avoid them. I should have dropped it several times, for it would have been better to have made several studies, than to finish this one with an arm too short. I hoped that my father would buy it, as he has not made me any present since I came here; but he does not seem to care for it.

There is a fair at the village. We went and amused ourselves by throwing all the sweetmeats we could find to the

Digitized by Google

crowd. It was like the *confetti* at the carnival. It causes a beautiful, spontaneous movement; all the hands are extended at once, everybody precipitates themselves on the ground, and it is like a human wave.

I delight in a crowd.

Monday, July 7th.—Nini, her sister, and Dina came with me into my room, and some one spoke of the bad luck attending the breaking of a mirror, and three candles. I have had three candles in my room several times since I have been here. Am I going to die then? There are moments when this idea turns me cold. But, when I believe in God, I fear less, although I still wish to live. Perhaps I shall become blind. That would be the same thing, for then I would kill myself. What is there on the other side? But what matters that? We shall escape from the sorrows we know of, at all events. Or perhaps I shall become entirely deaf. I write with inveterate obstinacy this word, which scorches my pen. My God! but I can not now even pray as formerly. What if it should mean the death of a near relative; of my father, for instance? But if it were mamma? In that case I should never forgive myself for ever having spoken a cross word to her.

What undoubtedly prejudices God against me is, that I take into account the least movement of my soul, and I can not help thinking that such a thought may be set down to my credit, and another on the wrong side of the ledger; for from the moment that I recognize a thought is good, there is no merit in it whatever. If I have any impulse that is generous, or good, or Christian-like, I perceive it at once; consequently, I feel satisfaction, in spite of myself, in thinking of what it should, in my opinion, yield me, and in these considerations, the merit fades away. Thus, a little while ago, I thought of going down and throwing myself in mamma's arms, and humbling myself before her, and, naturally, the thought which followed this one was one of self-praise, and the merit of the impulse was lost. Then I felt that it would not pain me much

Digitized by Google

to act thus, and that, in spite of myself, I would do it somewhat cavalierly or foolishly, for a genuine, serious dramatic exhibition of feeling between us would be impossible. It would not seem natural, for she has always seen me turn everything into ridicule. She would think that I was acting a part.

Saturday, July 9th.—We went on a pilgrimage to-day to Krementchoug, where we sailed on the Dnieper. It was I who induced them to take the excursion.

After thousands and thousands of disagreements, it was finally decided to go. You can not imagine what a commotion it all made. "Why do we go?" "And perhaps it is better not to go." "How can we carry it out?" "Shall we find something to eat and a place to rest in?" At last we decided to take Vassil to do the cooking. There is a mountain near Gavronzy, which, whenever we go anywhere, we have to cross, and consequently, we should be used to it. But no; each time it is like a new and frightful obstacle, which has just arisen. At last, after each had said in turn that he would remain at home, or that this one or that one had told him he would remain, we started in three carriages—Monsieur and Madame, Dina, the Swiss girl, Catherine, Nini's sister, and Sperandio; Nini, myself, Paul, and Micha. About half way, Paul and Micha began to sing gaily. This amazed the peasants on the way. We found the three brothers Babanine—Alexander, Etienne, and Vladimir—at the hotel drinking champagne.

Alexander spoke of the heart, of relationship, of recollections of youth—briefly, he was as open as a coach-house door, when it *is* open. I immediately guessed that there was something up; in fact, he had just bought Etienne's share of the inheritance. Etienne has succumbed to him like the others. There remains only Nicolas, but, in spite of his cries, he will also give in, and then Alexander will have all his father's estate. That man is a power. He walks straight to his aim, and will reach it. He is a power. I bow to and respect him

Digitized by Google

almost. He has quarreled with Paul, and will eat him up, too; therefore, I shall try to make peace between them.

Having no business together, our relations were courteous, and I took his arm this evening at the city garden. But it seems we have made the day more bright and gay than has ever been dreamed of in Poltava, and it will be remembered. I will tell you about it.

We dined in the aforesaid garden, a table with fifteen covers occupying the whole right side of the terrace, and where the public was not allowed to annoy us. The people came as near to us as they could, to see us eat, and to hear the orchestra, which played for us, and the chorus of women that had been secured. We listened to Bohemian songs, badly sung by Russian and Swiss women. I wished to ring the alarm bell, for the people did not come fast enough. About 8 o'clock the garden was filled.

Monday, July 11th.—This is St. Paul's day. We secured the military band at Gavronzy, which played during dinner, and in the evening on the balcony. In transporting soldiers and instruments, one of the postilions had his leg broken, and we immediately gave him the difference of the game of the day, which amounted to fifty roubles. The idea was mine. Few people—Lihopay, Etienne, and the proprietor of the hotel where we stopped at Poltava. The gentlemen played cards with the latter and admitted him into their society. He married a young lady of noble family. But the society of an innkeeper! With the family, we were fourteen. I wore a beautiful dress. Dina also looked very charming. For a while I conversed and laughed with Lihopay and Micha, as if it interested me, while the others listened to the amusing things we said. We danced, papa with mamma, having Paul and his wife opposite, Micha and I facing the Swiss girl with Etienne, Sperandio and Catherine. The hall was large, the music inspiring, and the feet tripped lightly. Dina danced alone all sorts of fancy steps, and quite gracefully. I, also, with my

Digitized by Google

atrocious grief (my ears), which turns my hair white, danced for a short time, without any pretense of gaiety.

Wednesday, July 13th.—It is almost always a sad thing to go away. We arrived at Poltava about 7 o'clock. I made the journey with Dina, and we conversed a little about our visit. However incredible this may seem, there was exhibited to us, during our stay, neither delicacy, nor morals, nor modesty, in their true sense.

In small towns in France we revere a confessor, or we have a grandmother, an old aunt, whom we greatly respect; but here there is nothing of the sort.

I believe we shall leave to-morrow.

I will stop at Kieff to have masses said. The darkest presentiments torment me, and I dread so much the meaning of all those forebodings! At Paul's feast, I found a candle at my place at table, forgotten there, it seems, by the man who lighted the chandeliers. And all those broken mirrors! I can not help fearing that some misfortune is impending.

Friday, July 15th.—We are at Karkoff. We found Micha and Lihopay on the platform. They left Poltava before we did.

I cough considerably, and I find it difficult to breathe. I have just been looking in the mirror, expecting to find the traces of illness; but no, nothing yet. I am slight, but very far from emaciation. Then, my bare shoulders have a healthy look, which does not go with the cough and the noises I hear in my throat. My hearing does not improve. I have taken cold, that is why I cough more. We entered a convent with mamma and she knelt with fervor before a painted image of the Virgin. How can anyone pray to an image? I had the firm intention of doing so, but I could not; but when I am at home I pray, and I feel better after doing so, I assure you. I believe that God can cure me, and He alone; but He would have to forgive me first for so many little wrong things I have done.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, July 16th.—This morning big Pacha, my old lover, arrived. They wished us to remain a day longer, and then it was proposed that everybody should go as far as Soumy, where we are at the present time. Pacha has grown stout; but he is the same shy, harmless being, as ever. A prosaic dreamer of rugged appearance, and yet cold and common-place. We saw each other only at the station, where we met Uncle Alexander, just arrived from Poltava, having promised to go to Soumy on business. Finally, we are all here —papa, mamma, Dina, Uncle Alexander, and I. The others remained behind. It is needless to say we parted with regret, good wishes, and kisses.

Thursday, July 21st.—Here we are at Kieff, the holy city—"the mother of all Russian cities," according to St. Vladimir, who, having been baptized, forced all his people, willing or unwilling, to be baptized also, by driving them into the Dnieper, where I think some must have been drowned. But the imbeciles bemoaned their idols, which were thrown into the river at the same time that the people were baptized.

We are still so ignorant of Russia, where so much beauty and richness remain unknown, that I will, perhaps, be telling you something new in saying that the Dnieper is one of the beautiful rivers of the world, and that its shores are very picturesque. Kieff is built in disorder, pell-mell, no matter how. There are the lower town and the upper town, and the streets are very steep. It is not comfortable, the distances are so enormous; but it is interesting. There is nothing left of the ancient city; besides, the civilization of those days contented itself with temples, meanly built, without art or solidity; that is why we possess none, or few, monuments. If I were given to exaggeration I would say there were as many churches as houses. Cathedrals and convents are very numerous; in fact, there are sometimes three or four in a row. All these have gilded cupolas, the walls and columns painted white or whitewashed, with green cornices and roofs. Often

Digitized by Google

the whole *façade* is covered with images and scenes from the lives of the saints, painted with extreme simplicity.

We first went to Lavra, a convent, where pilgrims come by the thousand every day from all parts of Russia.

The *iconostase*, or wall, which separates the altar from the body of the church, is covered with painted images inlaid in silver. The shrines and doors, which are completely covered with silver, must represent a good round sum. The tombs of the saints are also covered with embossed silver, and the chandeliers and sconces, and other things of the kind, are all in silver. It is said that these monks have sacks of precious stones.

Moreover, it is well known that they are as rich as the Rothschilds.

Peter the Great and Nicholas borrowed 10,000,000 roubles from them, which they never returned, and they were right. French monks give to the poor; these, here, never give to anyone.

You could not imagine how much money the pilgrims bring, even supposing that each pilgrim gives but one penny a day. And the masses that are paid for, and the candles which are consumed in prodigious quantities; and then, besides, there is the revenue from the sale of the medals and images which have been blessed. The great curiosity is the catacombs, subterranean passages very narrow and very low, damp, and naturally dark. Each one is provided with a lighted candle. We were conducted by a monk who hastily pointed out the open coffins containing the bodies of the saints, which are like mummies, all dried up, and that is the miracle, they say.

Mamma prayed with unexampled fervor. I am sure that Dina and papa also prayed for me; but the miracle was not accomplished. You laugh? Ah well, I almost counted on it. I attach no importance to churches, relics, or masses; no, but I relied on prayers, on my prayers, and I still rely on them to-day. They have not yet been heard, but perhaps they may

Digitized by Google

be some day. I believe only in God; but is the God I believe in a God Who listens and gives His attention to our affairs?

God will not cure me at once in a church. No, I have deserved nothing of that kind; but He will take pity on me and inspire a doctor, who will do me good, or perhaps, He will allow time to do so. But I shall not cease to pray.

Mamma believes in images and relics; in fact, her religion is paganism, like that of most people who are pious and—not very intelligent.

Perhaps, had I believed in images and relics, the miracle might have taken place; but there, truly, even when kneeling and praying, I could not believe. I can better understand that we should kneel anywhere and pray to God simply. God is everywhere; but how to believe in such things? It even seems to me that this fetichism insults God and wrongs Him. And for many persons, for the majority of pilgrims, God is altogether lost sight of; they see only a piece of withered flesh which has the power of performing a miracle, or a wooden image which they can invoke, and which will hear them. Am I wrong? Are they right? The most enlightened should be in the right. At least, the God I believe in must be an enemy of all those masses which are said to be essential to the true faith.

Paris, Tuesday, July 26th.—I am here at last. Here is life. Among other places, I went to the studio. I was received with acclamations and kisses. How much I care for the studio, and especially for Julian's friendship and aid. I feared he would have received me coldly, as I had broken a mirror, etc. Ah, well! no, the annoyance does not come from that side. Tony is entirely recovered.

Wednesday, July 27th.—I brought a design for a painting to Julian with which he was not enraptured, and then for two hours he spoke of nothing but my health, without mincing matters. It seems my condition is serious. I must believe it, since two months of treatment have brought no improvement. I know

Digitized by Google

myself that it is serious, that I am ill, that I am becoming emaciated! But still, I will not wholly believe in such horrible things. Breslau has received her mention; and has several orders for pictures. Madame —, who patronizes her a good deal, and at whose house she has met the principal artists, has ordered her portrait for the next *Salon*. She has already sold three or four things; in fact, she is launched. And I? I am consumptive. Julian tries to frighten me to force me to take care of myself. I would take care of myself if I had any confidence in the result. It is dismal at my age. Julian is right; a year from now, there will be a great change in me; that is to say, there will be nothing left of me. To-day, I went to see Colignon. She will soon die; there is one who is changed indeed! Rosalie had warned me, but I was shocked; she looks like death itself.

And then the room was filled with the odor of that strong broth which is given to the sick. It was horrible!

That odor is still in my nostrils. Poor Colignon, I brought her some soft white silk for a dress and a scarf. This silk pleased me so that I hesitated five months, and then decided to make this immense sacrifice by the evil thought that heaven would repay me. These calculations take away all the merit of good deeds. Can you fancy me weak, emaciated, pale, dying, dead?

Is it not an atrocious thing that we pass away thus? But, at least in dying so young, we inspire pity in all. I am moved, myself, in thinking of my end. No, that does not seem possible. Nice; fifteen years old; the three Graces; Rome; the follies of Naples; painting; ambition; unequaled hopes; and to end in a tomb, without having had anything, not even love!

I was right when I said that life is impossible when one is constituted as I am, and has been brought up under circumstances like those which have ruled my life. To live long would be too much to expect in such cases.

Digitized by Google

Nevertheless, we see people who are far more fortunate than I ever dreamed of being.

Ah! for almost every grief we may experience, there is some consolation. I was right, then; there is nothing so horrible as the pangs of wounded vanity; they are worse than death. But all the rest? The death of our friends, disappointed love, prolonged separations. Still, all that goes to make up life. Here I am on the point of crying. I even believe that I shall die. I am almost sure that I have grown weaker. Ah! I do not complain of that, but of my ears! And then, Breslau, now; Breslau is one distress the more. On all sides I am repulsed with loss, beaten.

Ah! well, give me death, then.

Tuesday, August 9th.—I went to the doctor's this morning for the third time in two weeks. He makes me come in order to get his fee, for his advice is always the same.

Truly it is enough to drive me crazy. Deafness happens to one in a thousand, they tell me, and I must be that one! Every day you see patients with throat diseases, consumptives who suffer, who die, but who do not become deaf. Ah! it is a misfortune so unexpected, so horrible! What? All this is not enough? I have lost my voice. I am ill, and I must also bear this anguish without name! It must be to punish me because I have complained of trifles. Is it God Who thus punishes me? The God of forgiveness, of goodness, of mercy? But the most wicked of men, would not be more pitiless!

And I am tortured at every instant. To have to blush before my family, to feel their kindness in speaking louder! To be afraid every time I enter a store that I shall not hear! This is not so bad, however, but with my friends it is frightful and cruel to be obliged continually to employ stratagems to hide my infirmity. And my painting, and the models! I do not always hear what they say to me, and tremble lest they shall speak to me; and, of course, my work is affected by this. When Rosalie is with me, she comes to my aid; alone

Digitized by Google

I am seized with dizziness and my tongue refuses to say: "Speak a little louder, I do not hear very well!" My God, have pity on me! Not to believe in God would be to die at once of despair. The lung affection came in consequence of the throat, and the throat caused what has happened to the ears. Now that must be treated! But I have always been under treatment. Doctor Krishaber is to blame for it all; it is in consequence of his treatment that I have—

Oh, God, must I then be so atrociously separated from the rest of the world? And it is I, I, I! Ah! there are some to whom it would not be so painful, but—

Oh, what a horrible thing!

Wednesday, August 10th—Thursday, August 11th.—I go to Passy every day, but no sooner am I installed there than I begin to hate my work. I had to dismiss Fortunata and pay her for six sittings without having derived any advantage; that was the painting over which I was wild. Julian said it would require to be modified and the composition improved; that, in itself was sufficient to upset me, as I do not know what to do. In spite of all, however, I commenced it, but then I became disgusted with it. The truth is, I have but twenty days left, and if it should rain, I shall lose some of those.

My painting represents a wall upon which is pasted an electoral notice, before which stands a grocer-boy with his basket; a workman who is laughing at a gentleman with a napkin under his arm; a stupid-looking fop; and a man in an immense Bonapartist hat which completely hides his face; in the background, a little woman. It is half life-size. Everything combined is driving me crazy; my hand trembles while I write. No sooner have I an idea than I am disgusted with it. I have nothing but this painting, and I have lost so many days and I am still undecided. What a horrible temperament mine is! When I am at liberty to do as I wish, I no longer know what to do. It is my illness which renders me stupid, and Breslau's honorable mention paralyzes my arms. Heaven is just! As to this painting,

Digitized by Google

Julian and the others say it is neither new nor original; granted! I do not care to argue the question.

Still, it is realistic, and, if it is well executed, the subject is always a good one. I must know if Alexis will be here during August; he poses as the fop, and without him I can not finish the painting, and I have not yet found the old gentleman with the napkin. All this would be nothing if I were satisfied and in good spirits. I lose my time and wear out my eyes in reading to calm myself.

The worst of all is, that there is no one whose advice I can ask. Tony is in Switzerland, Julian is at Marseilles, and I am in despair! As soon as I decide anything, a voice says to me, "Never mind what you try to do, it will not be successful." If I give up this subject, someone else will do it, and I shall be mortally vexed; if I paint it, I shall do it badly, for I have only twenty days left, and it will probably rain. Whatever I do will certainly turn out to be just the contrary of what I should have done; so there is no use in worrying about it. You see what a frightful state of doubt I am in!

My hair is turning white; one day I found two white hairs in front; that was since I began to grow deaf. Is it not horrible enough?

I ought to cut short my complaints. I have nothing, to be sure, but then I am no longer worthy of anything. Social life, politics, intellectual enjoyments, I take part in as if in a fog, and when I risk attempting to derive any pleasure from these things, I risk also covering myself with ridicule or passing for a blockhead. I have to affect all sorts of eccentricities; pretend to be brusque and absent-minded, in order to hide from Saint-Amand the fact that I do not hear well! It is enough to discourage an angel! Is it possible to admit that we are deaf, when we are young, elegant, and have great pretensions? Is it possible to solicit indulgence and pity under such conditions? Moreover, why should I? My brain is giving out and the room is whirling about me! Oh, no, there is no God such

Digitized by Google

as I had imagined! There is a Supreme Being, there is nature, there is, there is—but the God I have been in the habit of praying to every day does not exist. That He should grant me nothing, well and good; but why does He torture me to death in this manner, and make me more unhappy and more dependent than a beggar?

And what have I done? I am not a saint, it is true. I do not pass my life in a church, and I do not fast, but you know what my life has been; with the exception of the disrespect I show to my family, who do not deserve it, I have nothing to reproach myself with. Of what use is it to pray every night and ask pardon for being forced to say disagreeable things to my family? For if I have been to blame in my treatment of mamma, you well know it was to compel her to act.

In a word, I am horribly stricken, and stricken with the most refined cruelty.

I am certain that the God that I believed I knew, does not exist; it is not possible! But then? Oh, no, we must have a God, to Whom our good and evil actions are reported.

Friday, August 12th.—You, perhaps, believe that I have decided in regard to my picture; I can do nothing! I am thoroughly convinced of my own incapacity! Here is more than a month, counting the time lost in traveling, that I have done nothing! I can not even imagine that I am working! I am disgusted, in advance, with the worthless, dry, unfeeling things I am sure to produce. It is odious; I can do nothing!

Everything goes wrong. I gave up my painting and decided to paint Olstnitz, but she goes away in two days. Then I went in search of a model, which I could not find. Then I hastened to see Julia; she can pose only a part of the day, Monday. I turned to the janitor's little girl, but she is engaged ahead.

Then I went to see Amanda, who was working in the garden of her house at Issy. It did me good; although she is not artist enough to really encourage me, it cheered me.

I returned, resolved to make that confounded painting.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, August 13th.—Ah, well, I did not work even two hours at it, and then left it! Who knows? It might, perhaps, have been very good. However, I decided that it was pretentious and expressed nothing. In the first place, I do not like my models. And then I see my canvas exhibited on the boulevard, just after elections. And then, it is not a feminine subject. But then, who knows? By applying myself, perhaps? There is the perhaps that drives me crazy. Julian's opinion I ought to consider, perhaps, but Julian was mistaken last year about Zilhardt; he had predicted something good, and the result was a horror.

I will trust to chance, but if chance does not go according to my wishes—but what are my wishes?

It is a mania, upon my word! I must have Alexis for this painting, and I do not know when he will return, and I have only eighteen days left.

You are crazy to think of it! No, that will be time enough; I will leave it to chance! I will open a book at hazard, and if the line on which I place my finger contains an even number of letters, I will give up the painting.

There, it is even—but you are not ignorant that my right lung is affected; well then, you will undoubtedly be pleased to learn that the left one is equally affected. None of those stupid doctors have yet told me so, however. I felt it for the first time in the catacombs of relics at Kiew, but I thought it was a momentary pain caused by the dampness; since, it returns every day, and it is so strong to-night that I find it difficult to breathe, and it causes me an intense pain between the shoulder-blade and the chest, just where the doctors strike their little blows.

And the painting?

Sunday, August 14th.—Last night I found it difficult to sleep, and this morning I still feel the pain in my back; each time that I breathe, it hurts me, and when I cough, the pain is still worse.

Digitized by Google

Oh, surely I am in a fine state of health!

Now I have given up the painting. That is settled. But how much time I have lost! More than a month.

As for Breslau, encouraged as she is by her honorable mention, all must go well with her; while my arms are paralyzed and I have no confidence in myself.

Thursday, August 18th.—Do not read the record of to-day if you love lively things. I passed the day working, and while working, addressed to myself, in *petto*, the most cruel truths.

I have been looking over my sketches, and my progress can be followed step by step. Every once in a while I have said to myself that Breslau knew how to paint before I had begun to draw. But you will say to me: "Is this girl, then, the entire world to you?" I know not, but it is not a trifling sentiment that makes me fear her as a rival.

From the very beginning, whatever the men or our companions might say, I knew that she had talent, and you see that I was right. The least thought of that girl troubles me; a stroke of her pencil on one of my drawings strikes me to the heart. I feel her strength and it crushes me. She always drew comparisons between herself and me. To think that the dunces at the studio always said that she would never paint; "She has no idea of color, her painting does not hold together, all she knows is how to draw." Exactly what they say of me now. It should be a consolation; it is in fact the only one I have!

In 1876 (February), she had already received the medal for drawing. She began in June, 1875, after having studied for two years in Switzerland. For two years I saw her struggle against the most discouraging failures in painting; then success came little by little and in 1879, by Tony's advice, she exhibited a picture. At this time, I had been painting six months. Next month it will be three years since I first began to paint.

Digitized by Google

The question now is, whether I am capable of doing anything as good as the picture she exhibited in 1879? Julian says that the one of 1879 was better than that of 1881; only, as they were not good friends, he did not push it to success, although he remained neutral. Her painting of last year was placed like mine in the *morgue*, that is, in the exterior gallery.

Now, this year, she has made up with Julian, and patronized beside by the new school, is placed in the line. A prize will follow as a matter of course.

On leaving the studio, my aunt and I went driving in a cab on the banks of the Seine, toward the Trocadero and on the Avenues de Tourvilles. What a charming quarter it is, and one we know so little of! I feel fatigued like Breslau used to feel; I feel almost shriveled, like her, and I admire the sky and the delicacy of tone in the distance, as she used to. Breslau is my constant preoccupation, and I do not give one touch without asking myself how she would do it, how she would treat the matter. It is that the subject is nothing, nothing, nothing! The quality of the painting is everything—unless it is a question of an historical composition. But, in modern subjects, a head or a hand is enough, if the painting is good; what I make is dry, cold, severe! "I will try sculpture," I said one day. "Yes, marble will suit you; it is cold and dry," said Julian. That speech made me almost faint.

But in sculpture, we imitate the object before us; there is no trickery, no color, no perspective. But why do those people, (Tony, for instance) why do they insist that I should continue? Tony derives no advantage from it, neither does Julian, for the time has come when I shall work more at home than at his studio as I have given up my painting.

I have said nothing about the departure of Olstnitz; she has wanted to go for such a long time and we always detained her. But the poor child has stood it as long as she could, she is terribly homesick. Just think, I said good-morning and

Digitized by Google

good-night, and every evening reproached myself for not conversing more with her, and it was the same every day.

I had about one hundred and fifty generous impulses to draw nearer to her, but never went any further. I excused myself because of all the troubles I had to contend with.

Finally, she has gone, poor little thing; a nature truly angelic, and her departure wrung my heart, but she will be happier at home. What grieves me more than all, is that I can not make amends for my coldness and indifference. I treated her as I treat mamma, my aunt, Dina; but it is less painful for my own family than it was for that sweet, calm child all alone in a foreign land. She left yesterday at 9 o'clock. I could not speak for fear of weeping, and I affected an indifferent air; but I hope she understood.

Saturday, August 20th.—I went alone to see Falguière, the sculptor; I told him I was an American and showed him some designs of mine, letting him understand my desire to work. He found one of them very good, very good; all the others good. He sent me to a studio where he gives lessons and said that if I could not make arrangements there, he would give me instruction either at his house or my own. That was very kind of him, but for a teacher, I have Saint-Marceaux whom I adore, and I shall content myself with the studio.

Biarritz, Friday, September 16th.—Having made our farewells, we left on Thursday morning. We were to pass the night at Bayonne, but we preferred Bordeaux, where Sarah was to appear that evening. We, therefore, took two stalls in the balcony for 50 francs, and I saw "*La Dame aux Camélias*," Unfortunately, I was very tired; I had heard so much of this woman that I can not describe my impressions. Before seeing her, it seemed to me that she would do nothing like anybody else, so it was a surprise to see her walk, talk, and sit down. I have seen her but four times—once, when I was small, in "The Sphinx;" then, lately, in "The Sphinx" again, and in "*L'Etrangère.*" The most extraordinary attention was

Digitized by Google

paid to her slightest movement. I think she is altogether charming.

Biarritz is certainly very pretty. The sea has been enchanting all day. The gray tints were beautiful.

Saturday, September 17th.—Up to the present time, I have seen none of that fashion and elegance I expected to see at Biarritz. As to the shore, from an artistic point of view, it is disagreeable and ugly.

Oh, Bay of Nice! Oh, Gulf of Naples! even the small watering-places around Nice—Eses, Beaulieu, etc. Here we are annoyed by piles of small rocks, thrown down pell-mell, as if placed there on purpose for decoration. The beach is small; at the right, the light-house; at the left, a cliff; and beyond, two ramparts, enormous desert shores.

The site is varied without being picturesque. There is not a house, really on the sea-shore; we are climbing and descending all the time. I explored the surroundings for two hours in a carriage, and did not find the shadow of any subject for a picture; not a fisherman, not a sail, nothing but fir trees, villas, and long roads. It were better to go to Spain. I will see the galleries, make a few copies, and perhaps I may find a subject for a painting; at all events, I can make studies. Yes; I will spend a month or six weeks there almost without luggage, unknown and quiet.

Sunday, September 18th.—I have some light dresses of cambric or white woolen without trimming; but made charmingly, very fresh, and smart; pretty canvas shoes, bought here; and white, youthful-looking hats—hats for happy women. This makes, altogether, an outfit which attracts much attention.

I am in a desperate state of mind. Mamma and my aunt are dull and anything but cheerful; in fact, it is anything but a pleasure trip to a fashionable sea-side resort.

However, I can not resign myself to remain shut up in Paris, for I shall never go into the *very best* society. The

Digitized by Google

silence and solitude of the studio is still the place where I find the most happiness.

Tuesday, September 27th.—Yesterday, at Bayonne, with the family; to-day, at Fontarabia, with the family, also; I never go out without them. I wanted to take a ride, but my riding-habit does not fit me, and then, it would bore me to ride with a Russian whom I do not know very well and who is tiresome.

Fontarabia is charming, and, moreover, Biarritz was so ordinary and tiresome in its common-place beauty, that we are happy to leave it. Immediately, after my arrival here, I found on the beach some beggar children who would make an interesting painting; only I want to see Spain first, and if there I do not meet with anything better, I shall return by way of Fontarabia.

I gambled (there was a *roulette* table); but after losing 40 francs, I made sketches. It was an out-of-the-way corner. I hope nobody saw me play. Oh, those three hours in the carriage, listening to Madame R—! That lady tells silly stories that have not even the charm of society small-talk. Ah! how have I offended heaven that I must endure this?

Why can I not eat the wretchedly cooked food at the hotel, which, however, princes of the blood endure? Why can I not tolerate the intellectual poverty which surrounds me? For, doubtless, I have but my deserts, and then, if indeed I were so superior, I should be able—

Oh, the curse of the common-place!

Oh, dreams of my youth! Oh, divine hope! Oh, if there be a God, He forsakes me! I am serene only at Paris. Traveling, people see each other continually, and my family rasps me. It is not that my elderly female relatives are vulgar, or their bearing out of the way. When no strangers are present they do very well, and then they are my family; but, so soon as there are any strangers present, mamma poses and becomes affected in her pronunciation in a way that is sure to exasperate me.

Digitized by Google

It is somewhat my fault. I always reproached them with not knowing how to gain an entrance into the highest society, and I sometimes said disagreeable things to prod them on to do something. It could not fail to give them this pitiful attitude. I complain of my family, constantly, but I love them. I am just.

Madrid, Saturday, October 2d.—You imagine you have been dreaming after leaving that bloody infamy, a bull-fight! Abominable slaughter of sorry horses and bulls, in which men have the appearance of incurring no danger, and play an ignoble part. Besides, the only moment interesting for me, was, when the men were sprawling on the ground and one of them was tossed by the bull. It was a miracle he escaped; so he had an ovation.

They throw into the arena cigars, and hats that are thrown back very adroitly; and handkerchiefs are waved, and uncouth howls are uttered.

It is a cruel sport, but is it amusing? Well, no! it is neither soul-stirring, nor interesting, it is horrible and ignoble. It is a fraudulently furious beast that they goad with many-colored mantles, and in whose body they plant a kind of dart. Blood flows; the more the animal shakes himself, the more he jumps, and so much the more he wounds himself. Poor horses with bandaged eyes are put in front of him, and he rips them up with his horns. The intestines protrude; nevertheless, the horse gets up, and to his last gasp obeys the man who often fails with him, but is hardly ever hurt.

This blood is black on the sand, and scarlet on the back of the bull. When we arrived, there was a black bull in the arena, and he looked as if he were striped with scarlet. At first I thought him adorned with ribbons, for the lances planted in his sides were streaming with blood. And after the horses are dead, the fight continues; a dozen Spanish idiots goad and cripple with stabs the bull that bounds and pursues them; but it is always the mantle that he runs against.

Digitized by Google

And when wounded, bleeding, bellowing in distress, he stops and turns aside his head, this red mantle is still presented to him, and the men kick him. Then the public applauds, the poor beast falls on his knees, and lies down to die in the unaggressive pose of a cow resting in a meadow. He is killed by a stroke on the neck. The music strikes up, and then come ribbon-bedecked horses harnessed to a sort of butcher's frame, to which the dead bull is fastened, and dragged away on the gallop. And then it begins again. There are three men on horseback, more horses disemboweled, and then the absurd and bloody goading of the toreadors.

And when a dozen or more horses, and five or six bulls have been killed, high society leaves to take a turn on the Buen Retiro which is one of the handsomest promenades in the world, and which I prefer to the Bois, to say nothing of London, Vienna, or Rome. But no, Rome has a charm so great that nothing can be compared to it.

The king, the queen, and the *infantas* were present at the fight. There were more than 14,000 spectators, and it is the same way every Sunday, and you must see the faces of all these sinister boobies to believe that they can cultivate a passion for such horrors, if indeed they were real horrors! But think of those inoffensive hacks and those bulls which are only furious when excited, wounded, tortured.

The queen, who is an Austrian, can not enjoy herself. The king has the appearance of a Parisian Englishman. The youngest of the *infantas* is the only pretty one. Queen Isabella has told me that I resemble her; I am flattered, for she is really pretty.

We started from Biarritz Tuesday morning, and arrived that evening at Burgos. The Pyrenees impressed me by their majestic beauty; I am glad to escape from the pasteboard rocks of Biarritz.

We traveled with a large gentleman who spoke no French; none of us spoke Spanish, nevertheless he explained an illus-

Digitized by Google

trated paper to me, and presented me flowers at a stopping place. Besides, there was a young man who was going to Lisbon, and who was very anxious to be of use to us—a kind of Gibraltar Englishman.

If you think that traveling with my mother and my aunt is a pleasure, you are beautifully mistaken. However, perhaps they should not be blamed for their behavior, for they have neither my youth, nor my curiosity. Well, since it is past, I will speak no more of their innocent worryings, the more so, as they are such meddlers that I shall have a thousand occasions to speak of it again. I wish you could see their unhappy looks, and hear their absurd questions. They pretend to believe themselves in a country never before visited! "And the guide said that it was cold in Burgos. That was a real calamity, and we should have brought pelisses. What a country it is! And what is there to see? The cathedral? But only the English go there." And the worst is, that everything is addressed to me in the third person, or, indeed, nothing is said to me; but, while talking of something else, what a manner they have! And if I protest, they say I am seeking a quarrel; and, nevertheless, it was not my idea. It was they who proposed to come to Spain.

Then Burgos—ah! they are insupportable! When it is not dolorous resignation and complaints in the third person, there is such a complete indifference that it is absolutely astonishing.

All the same I went to the cathedral. Is it possible to describe it—this mass of ornamentation, of brilliantly-colored gildings, of floral festoons, and trifles that make a magnificent whole? Ah! the twilight of the chapels! the massive iron gratings! It is truly a wonder. And over all there is the odor of religious romanticism. These churches invite rendezvous. One takes holy water, and looks for some one to make eyes at. It is the same way with that comparatively modest convent of Cartuja. We went there toward evening, which still further

Digitized by Google

accentuates the poetry of Spanish churches. At the cathedral they exhibit that celebrated Magdalen of Leonardo da Vinci(?) Horrors! I have to acknowledge that I find it ugly, and that it is meaningless to me; the same as the Raphaels for that matter.

Finally, yesterday morning, we arrived at Madrid. This morning we went to the gallery. Ah, the Louvre is indeed pale beside it. There are pictures of Rubens, Philippe de Champagne—I can not recall them all—and even Van Dyck, and the Italians. Nothing is comparable to Velasquez—but I am still too dazzled to criticise. And Ribera? Heavens! but these are the true naturalists! Can one see anything truer to nature, more admirably, more divinely, more absolutely true? Ah, how I am moved, and how unhappy I am at seeing such things! And people dare to speak of the pale colors of Raphael, and the paltry paintings of the French school!

Coloring! To feel color and not produce it, that is impossible! Soria came before dinner with his friend, Monsieur Pollack (director of the railroads), and his son, who is a painter. He has studied painting with Julian.

I am going to the gallery alone to-morrow. It is incredible what a shock an idiotic remark can give me when I am looking at these masterpieces. It is as painful as the stab of a knife, and if I take offense, it appears silly. There is something which makes me ashamed, and I scarcely know how to explain it. I do not wish to be seen admiring anything; besides, I am ashamed to be surprised into the manifestation of any feeling. I can not explain this clearly.

It seems to me that you can not talk seriously of something that has moved you, except to someone with whom you are in perfect sympathy. I talk well with—with Julian, who is not a blockhead, but there is always a grain of exaggeration, so that enthusiasm may have a mocking side, so to speak, which puts you beyond the reach of raillery, however slight. But to receive a profound impression and tell it simply, seri-

Digitized by Google

ously, as it has been felt—I do not think that I could, unless to one whom I loved entirely. And if I could tell it to an indifferent person, that would create immediately an invisible lien, and one which might afterward cause much embarrassment; we would appear to have committed an evil action together.

Therefore, in the exchange of ideas, we must employ the Parisian manner, affecting to see things a little from the professional point of view, so as not to appear too poetic, and at the same time talking from the artistic point of view.

Tuesday, October 4th.—But wait, let us finish *yesterday*. Then from the Buen Retiro we went to a café to hear and see some gypsy songs and dances.

It is altogether strange; a guitar is strummed by a man and a dozen women clap their hands in rhythm, then, suddenly, one of them begins to utter some notes, broken, chromatic songs; it is impossible to describe this. It is altogether Arabian. But at the end of an hour you have enough of it. These women are in gowns, with fichus over their shoulders and flowers in their hair; and these muslin, or even linen, dresses prevent a view of those most characteristic movements of the hips. These Spanish women, if not pretty, are all interesting subjects for pictures. Look at their tints, their eyes. Ah! seeing them you comprehend Spanish painting; it is superb! With paint plentifully spread on, it is free, it is easy, it has a color!!

At 9 o'clock this morning, I was at the gallery with Velasquez; in comparison with his pictures, the work of every other artist is dry and pale, except Ribera, who, nevertheless, is not his equal. In the "Portrait of an Unknown Sculptor," there is a hand which gave me a clue as to where Carolus Duran learned how to paint as he does; it is well known that it is his ambition to become a second edition of Velasquez.

We have bought a Spanish guitar and mandolin. If one has not seen Spain, one can not imagine what it is. And they

Digitized by Google

say that Madrid is less characteristically Spanish than what I have yet to see—Toledo, Grenada, and Seville. At all events, I am delighted to be here. I am burning to copy that hand, to study at the gallery, then to paint a picture and stay here two months, if necessary.

Thursday, October 6th.—I have copied the hand of Velasquez. I was dressed modestly in black, with a mantilla like all the women here; but people came to look at me—one man, in particular. It seems that in Madrid the men are worse than they are in Italy, with their promenades under the windows, and their guitars; they follow you everywhere, and insist on talking to you. There are notes exchanged in the churches, and the young girls have thus five or six sighing after them. The men are extremely gallant toward the women without any element of insult, for the *demi-monde* of France does not exist; such women are very much despised; but in the street the Spaniards tell you very plainly that they adore you; they ask permission to accompany you, with all due respect, knowing that you are a lady.

And you see men throw down their mantles that you may walk on them. For my part, I find this delightful. When I start out simply, but stylishly, dressed, they stop and look at me, and I feel born again, and it is a new, fabulous existence, tinted with the chivalry of the Middle Ages.

Sunday, October 9th.—Well, there is nothing new. Pollack and Escobar have come every day. Mamma started for Russia to-day; their presence saved us many tears. I was very sad all day, but nevertheless it could not be avoided; it was necessary for her to go, since my father wished to see her in regard to business matters, and so she started!

The evening was passed in talking art with Pollack, and now that I am alone, I imagine dark things; if mother should die without our seeing each other again.

Oh, if that terrible thing should happen, it would be a punishment for my imbecile and unfilial revolts!

Digitized by Google

I should pass my life weeping, because I was not able to redeem my hardness. Oh, I should go mad! Imagine it! to feel myself at fault, and never, never be able to expiate my follies.

She would die believing that I did not love her, that it would make no difference to me, that I would soon be consoled, perhaps, even, that I was glad of it.

I fortify myself against misfortunes, but I can not imagine the effect of this upon me. Rather anything in the world than this. To become blind, or paralyzed, would be very hard; but to lose mamma under such circumstances, it would seem to me that I had killed her.

Monday, October 10th.—As I was working in the gallery, two men came up, tolerably advanced in age, and not very handsome. They asked if I were not Mademoiselle Bashkirtseff. I answered that I was, and they seemed delighted. Monsieur Soldatenkoff is a millionaire from Moscow who travels a great deal, and adores art and artists. Afterward Pollack told us that Madrazo, the son of the superintendent of the gallery, and a painter himself, greatly liked my copy, and asked to be presented to me. Old Soldatenkoff asked me if I would sell the picture, and I was stupid enough to say no.

As to painting, I am on the road to learning a great deal. I see what I did not see before; my eyes are opening. I rise on tip-toe and do not breathe, so to speak, for fear of breaking the enchantment, for it is a veritable enchantment. I hope at last to realize my dreams. I think I understand what I must do; all my energies are directed toward one great object; a good piece of painting—not of cabinet work, but of flesh and things that speak, and when I can do that, I shall be an artist, and be able to do wonderful things. For everything, everything is in the execution! What is "Vulcan's Forge" by Velasquez, or his "Spinners?" Take away that marvelous execution from these pictures, and they would be no better than those of any unknown

Digitized by Google

artist. I know that many people will not agree with me; first of all, the imbeciles who pose as adorers of sentiment. But hold, sentiment is the poetry of execution, the enchantment of the brush. We do not realize how true that is! Do you like the primitive forms, thin and ingenuous, and glossy in execution? They are curious and interesting, but it is impossible to admire them. Do you like Raphael's sublime cardboard virgins? I shall appear callous, but I assure you that they do not move me. They contain a sentiment and a nobility that I respect, but can not admire. But there are other pictures of Raphael like the "School of Athens," for instance, which are incomparable, particularly when engraved or photographed. They contain a sentiment, an idea, a breath of true genius. Remark that I am equally opposed to the ignoble masses of flesh by Rubens, and the magnificent, but unintellectual, flesh of Titian. Both mind and body are needed. Like Velasquez, one must execute like a poet, and think like a man of genius.

Tuesday, October 11th.—I dreamed that the trouble in my right lung was explained to me; in certain parts the air does not penetrate, which makes me raise—but it is too disgusting to describe, it is enough that my lung is affected. Oh! I know it, for some time I have felt a sort of uneasiness, a slight indefinable weakness. I am no longer as I was. I do not feel as others do; a sort of enervating vapor envelopes me. I speak figuratively, of course. It seems as if I had something foreign in the chest, and I have—but why these absurdities? I shall know all about it soon enough.

Wednesday, October 12th.—That Paris! I have always hated the city itself; always, always! How much more sympathetic is Madrid, in spite of its irregular streets and poverty-stricken appearance, in comparison with Paris. Look at Paris; its elegance wearies, its shops, its *cocottes*, its new houses; it is terribly anti-artistic. Oh, Rome! (and Madrid resembles it a little.) Oh, the South! I am of the South; I, born in the Ukraine and raised at Nice. I adore the South.

Digitized by Google

I have finished my copy of "Vulcan," by Velasquez, and, to believe the public, it ought to be good. The poor devils of artists who make copies of celebrated pictures to sell, came several times a day to see me at work, and the *gamins* of the school of fine arts, and the foreigners, of whom several would talk together in English, French, or Spanish, saying the most flattering things about me.

And when I go away they climb up on the ladder to look at my big brushes and see how it is painted; in a word, my poor children, it is enough to puff me up with pride were I less ambitious.

Friday, October 14th.—We started for Toledo yesterday at 7 in the morning. I have heard it talked of so much that I imagined something marvelous. In spite of good sense, I obstinately pictured it to myself as something in the style of the Renaissance and the Middle Ages, with wonderful specimens of architecture, sculptured doors (blackened by time), divinely wrought balconies, etc. I well knew it was something different; but the picture was graven on my imagination and spoiled Toledo for me, when I perceived that Moorish city with its inevitable thinness of walls and doors battered, or having that appearance. Toledo is all on a height, like a citadel, and when one looks at the country and the Tagus from the summit, it resembles certain improbable backgrounds of Leonardo de Vinci, or even of Velasquez. Those almost mathematical mountains of bluish green, seen through a window beside which is the lady, or the cavalier, in prune-colored velvet, with small and beautiful hands. As to Toledo itself, it is a labyrinth of little, irregular, narrow streets, where the sun does not penetrate, where the inhabitants have the appearance of camping out, so little are the houses like ordinary ones. It is a mummy, a Pompeii preserved entire but seeming ready to crumble into dust from old age; the ground is parched, and the high walls are burned by the sun. There are marvelously picturesque courts, and mosques turned into

Digitized by Google

churches and daubed with whitewash. What is seen where the whitewash has crumbled off is very curious—patterns and arabesques with their colors still bright, ceilings of blackened wood with beams joining curiously, high overhead. The cathedral is as fine as that of Burgos, and there is a profusion of ornamentation. The doors are marvels, and exquisite is the cloister with its court full of laurel and rose-bushes, which invade the gallery and twine around the pillars and the grave-faced statues! And when the sun shines upon all this, it is incomparably poetic.

Besides, the Spanish churches are something that can not be imagined. Ragged guides, velvet-robed sacristans, strangers, and dogs promenade, pray, and bark there, and it has a strange charm. Coming out of a chapel, it seems as if one ought to meet suddenly, behind a pillar somewhere, the idol of one's soul.

It is inconceivable that a country so near the center of European corruption should be still so new, so virgin, so wild!

They say that Toledo is a very uncomfortable city to stay in. I do not know; there are so many things to see, and I stayed only a few hours. I shall return to paint certain very black streets, and those little columns, pilasters, ceilings, old doors with large Spanish and Moorish nails, jewels, marvels! But it was hot and I did not see clearly.

It is picturesque; everything is a picture, one does not even have to choose, everything is strange and interesting, but it has not the sympathies of my heart. If I had had more time it might have been different.

But I do not fancy this mixture of Goths and Arabs and Spaniards. The *coro* (choir) of the cathedral is truly a marvel; for example, the stalls have historic bas reliefs in wood, carved with such detail and of such finish, that one is seized with admiration. Ah! I have told you the cathedral is a prodigy of elegance, of richness, and above all of lightness; it seems as if those slender columns, those carvings, and

Digitized by Google

those vaults could not resist time; one fears lest such treasures should fall into ruin. It is so beautiful, one feels almost a personal apprehension; but for four or five centuries has this prodigy of patience been standing immutable and admirable. I tell you the thought that one carries away is: If it only lasts! And there is a terror lest it should be ruined, deteriorated, worn out. I wish no one had a right to touch this creation with a finger, and even people who walk there are guilty, for it seems to me that they contribute to the very slow but inevitable destruction of the edifice. I well know that for centuries still it will stand, but— One hates to leave the great walls pierced with Arab windows, parched in the sun, and the mosques with their superb rows of pillars and their arabesque carvings. Bah! Go to Rome and see the sun set behind the dome and all these prodigious gew-gaws, all these elegancies of chiseled stones, of Gothic and Arab doors, all these frail and brittle marvels of a proud and disturbing character, all these will fall like scales and seem to you puerile ornaments.

I look at the photographs of Toledo. It seems to me that I have been mistaken. I have not observed things correctly.

Saturday, October 15th.—I have passed the day at the Escurial with my aunt whom it bored, and who, with a placid face, tried to trick me. If I had not heard the guide talking she would have swindled me out of the burial vaults in order that I should not become too weary. "And then the coffins—it is frightful!" What a trial it is to be obliged to take this journey in this manner! I saw, as in a dream, that magnificent block of granite. Sombre, sad, sublime! As for me, I find it superb; that majestic sadness is fascinating. The palace follows the form of the gridiron of St. Lawrence (consult the guides), which gives it a little the air of a barracks; but it rises above fields that are burnt, sombre, and storm-tossed like a sea, and produces a profound impression with its granite walls as thick as a Parisian house, its cloisters, its columns, its galleries, terraces, courts, and ponds of green water. It is cold, they

Digitized by Google

say; it is sad, yes; but it is restful after the irritating visions of Toledo. We visited the royal apartments covered with very ugly tapestry, wrought in colors that *shout* at you. However, the king's study is a gem; there are wooden doors incrusted with ornaments of polished steel and pure gold; then a parlor oratory in embroidered silk is ravishing. What a contrast to the chamber of Philip II.! This tyrant dwelt in a miserable bare cell opening into a sort of low chapel, all in marble, which itself opened into the church. From his bed he saw the altar and could hear mass. For my part, I can not remember all the chambers, staircases, and cloisters that they took us through; the place is so large! And the long galleries and immense windows closed by box-like wooden shutters, with massive and slightly ornamented doors!

The church is admirable in its simplicity; its grand, plain vaults produce an altogether imposing effect. The royal tomb and the stairs, which lead to it, all in various colored marbles, are exceedingly rich.

The sarcophagi are of Toledo marble with ornaments of hammered copper. They are splendid. Only five places are left. Mercèdès, whose fate was so touching, waits, in a little lateral chapel, for the reconstruction of the tomb for *infantas*, and queens without children.

The *coro* is of unsculptured wood, but in the middle there is a marvelous lectern, with books as large as I am.

The library, Oh! There are manuscripts that I admired for a long time, although I did not know much about them.

And you would have me prefer trivial ornamentation to that sombre majesty! What character, what sobriety, and how far we are from the indescribable mass of ornaments and the brittle fretwork of Toledo!

Then they took us through a park where the king shoots rabbits, and showed us the pavilion, built in 1781, I think; a gem. The staircases and the courts are in colored marble, and there are a quantity of little *salons* upholstered with

Digitized by Google

pictures, even with pretty pictures, or with pale silk deliciously faded, with ravishing embroidery, blue and rose-colored flowers; green, harmoniously faded, shows finely on white mellowed to an incomparable ivory.

Those little *salons* in satin of a lustreless white or pale blue, or old gold, with ceilings deliciously painted or incrusted, are enough to drive one wild.

There is a cabinet adorned with pictures embroidered on tapestry; a few feet off you would think them paintings; and there are marvelous ivory carvings and bisque figures.

Sunday, October 16th.—One of the most curious things here is the Rastro, a street occupied by every kind of booth like the fairs in Russian villages, where everything can be found. And what a life and animation and a buzzing there are under this burning sun. It is wonderful! Infinitely rich bric-a-brac is lodged in dirty houses, back shops, and legendary staircases. There are masses of fabrics, tapestries, and embroidery enough to drive one crazy with longing to possess them.

And the wretched inhabitants seem absolutely reckless; they drive nails through beautiful fabrics on the walls to hang up old frames; they walk on embroideries spread out on the floor, which is littered with old furniture, frames, statuary, shrines, silverware, and old rusty nails! I bought a salmon-red silk curtain, covered with embroidery, for which they asked me 700 francs and took 150; and a linen skirt embroidered with pale flowers of a pretty tint, that they gave me for 5 francs after asking 20.

It is unfortunate not to have 100,000 francs to spend; one could furnish a studio; why, with only 100,000 francs what could not be bought?

Escobar came to take us to the bull-fight. We were in a box with Mademoiselle Martinez, her father, two others, and Escobar. I wished to return for a second impression. Eight bulls were announced, and it is, I believe, the last Sunday. In short, a brilliant performance. The king, the queen, and the

Digitized by Google

infantas were present. There were music, sun, crazy clamor, stamping, whistling, handkerchiefs waved, hats thrown. It was a unique spectacle of an enthralling grandeur and like nothing else. I began to enter into the spirit of the thing and was interested in the performance. I went there reluctantly, with a shiver of disgust; nevertheless, I kept a good countenance in face of that butchery and refined cruelty. It is very beautiful provided one looks without thinking. Nevertheless, one ends by getting interested, and through pride keeps a brave face before these ignominies. I looked all the time. One leaves drunk with blood; for a small consideration one would stick steel darts in everybody's neck.

I cut my melon at the table, as if I were planting a *banderilla*, and my meat seemed to come palpitating from under the torn hide of the bull. Oh, it makes you tremble and your head heavy! It is a school of assassins. Now, doubtless, the toreadors are handsome and graceful; their movements are fine and dignified, notwithstanding their extreme suppleness.

This duel of man against an immense brute seems magnificent; but is it indeed a duel, when it is always known which will succumb? I acknowledge that there is something fine and exciting in the scene, when the *matador* appears in the arena, his brilliant costume displaying his fine form to the best advantage, and makes his three characteristic salutes (he raises his hand three times as high above his head as he can, and then brings it down with a broad sweep), when, calm and cool, he places himself, with his mantle and sword, directly in front of the animal. This is the best part of the show. He causes scarcely any bloodshed. Yes, I acknowledge it; this part is astonishing; in fact, the Spaniards themselves do not care for the horse part. Then I am reconciled to this savage pleasure? I do not say that, but it has a side which is very picturesque, almost grand. The amphitheatre, with the 14,000 or 15,000 spectators, is like a

Digitized by Google

vision of the antiquity I so love. And then, again, there is the bloody, horrible, ignoble side. If the men were less adroit, if they oftener received severe wounds, I should not complain; but it is their cowardice which revolts me; nevertheless, they say it requires the courage of a lion—well, no, they are too adroit, and too surely avoid the foreseen and provoked attacks of the terrible, but artless, brute. The real danger is to the *banderilleros*, for the man runs to encounter the bull, and at the moment the latter tries to gore, dodges him, while planting his *banderillas* between the shoulders. It requires exceptional courage and skill.

Monday, October 17th.—And yet, there are people who are happy, while I, who have everything to make me so, am not!

I have money enough to come, go, paint, travel—*I do as I please;* you know the rest. I would rather lack money, and not do as I please, than be with people who enrage me with their obstinacy, *for my good.*

When people are convinced that they are doing right, they can not be moved. My family are convinced. If they had not this nerve-jarring, rasping, murdering fault of persecuting me *from love*, I might, perhaps, pardon them for being neither artistic nor agreeable; and yet, there are happy people! But look at this trip with my aunt! It is enough to make me start for Paris to-morrow.

Friday, October 19th.—There is no gainsaying it; I cough at such a rate that it must injure everything inside of me; and, with that, I grow thin, or rather—yes, I grow thin. When I stretch out my arm it has an attenuated look, instead of its former roundness. It is still pretty, however, and I do not complain yet. At present it is the interesting period; one becomes slender without emaciation, and there is a touch of languor, which is becoming; but, if I continue, in a year I shall turn out a skeleton.

Tuesday, October 20th.—This morning I passed two hours at Cordova, just time for a glance at a city that is delightful

Digitized by Google

in its way. I adore cities like that; there were Roman remains which delighted me, and the mosque was a veritable marvel.

One would like to stay a month at Cordova. But for that you must not travel with an aunt who manages to enrage you ten times in ten minutes, and ends by becoming angry herself. Sometimes it is, "There is nothing to see here, and the guide took us here only to earn his fee and to make us lose the train." Then it is a carriage which is necessary to go to the mosque! "At Cordova at 8 o'clock in the morning! why, we shall catch our death of cold, and I, at my last gasp, can not walk; the chilly air is terribly unhealthy." Sweet society, adorable company, for an artistic journey through Spain! As for me, I pray God continually that He will counteract this, for it is exasperating to see everything ruined this way. All the same I have no luck; it is enough to make one weep.

I take care of myself and love comfort and am very fond of good eating; but when it comes to annoying me with this, the whole livelong time, I would rather be thrown out in the street!

Oh, Lord, but these people tire me! When little Pollack was around, at least I escaped these bothers to a certain extent. Besides, my aunt is charmed when some one is with us, for she well knows that she enrages me, poor woman!

Saturday, October 22d.—Behold us in this much-vaunted Seville! On the whole I am losing much time here. I have seen the gallery—a single room full of Murillos. I should have preferred something else, there is nothing but virgins and saints. I, who am a barbarian, presumptuous and coarse, have not yet seen a virgin such as I imagine she should be. The virgins of Raphael are beautiful in photographs. I shall give you my precious opinion when I have seen them again. Murillo does not appeal to me very strongly, I confess, with his red-cheeked, round-faced virgins. To be sure, there is the one in the Louvre so much copied; it has the most feeling of any Murillo I have ever seen; it might even be called divine.

Digitized by Google

And the cigar and cigarette factories! The odor! If it were only nothing but tobacco! There is a jumble of women with bare arms and necks, girls, and children. For the most part these squirming beings are pretty, and it is a curious sight. Spanish women have a grace which other women have not. Venders of coffee and cigarette-rollers walk like queens; and withal they have a suppleness, an incomparable grace, and necks set in such a manner! round arms with pure outlines, and smooth as marble.

There was one woman in particular who rose to procure some more leaves of tobacco; she had the carriage of a queen, the suppleness of a cat, a divine grace, with a superb head, a coloring dazzling as a carnation, such arms, such eyes, such a smile—great heavens! but she was beautiful; and there are many who have wonderful style about them.

The little girls are all droll and charming. There are some homely women, but only a few, and even the homely ones have some redeeming feature.

Wednesday, October 25th.—Well, let us hope time will set things right. My brain is in a maze.

I have seen the cathedral, which is one of the most beautiful in the world, in my opinion, and one of the largest. We saw the Alcazar with its delicious gardens, the bath of the sultanas, and then we took a walk in the streets; I invent nothing when I say that we were the only women in hats; so it is to our hats that I attribute the astonishment of the passers-by.

I was not becomingly dressed, or there might have been other reasons for looking at me; but I wore a skirt of gray linen, a black, close-fitting jacket, and a black traveling hat. But foreigners are looked at here as if they were learned monkeys; people stop, call after them, and make invidious remarks.

I was hooted at by the children, but the grown-up ones told me I was pretty and *salada* (salt); it is, as you know, very *chic* to be *salada*.

Digitized by Google

Seville is all white, all white; the streets are narrow; in most of them carriages can not go, and with all this it is not so picturesque as might be wished. Ah, Toledo! I see my barbarity now.

Toledo is a marvel; Seville, with its low, whitewashed houses, is a little *bourgeoise* in character. It has, indeed, its vulgar quarter—but in every country in the world the low quarters are interesting. What there is, is in such a harmony and richness of tone that one would wish to paint everything.

I am much exasperated at not speaking Spanish; it is a frightful handicap, above all in painting and making studies.

These women and half-wild children, clothed in picturesque rags, are superb subjects to paint. It is ravishing, notwithstanding the crudity of the white houses. But it rains constantly and I am *en famille.*

I understand that one may be happy living *en famille*, and I should be unhappy alone. One may go shopping *en famille*, go to the Bois *en famille*, sometimes to the theatre; one may be sick *en famille*, in fact do everything that pertains to family life—but to travel *en famille!!!* Would I experience any pleasure in waltzing with my aunt? Well, it is the same thing. It is mortally wearisome and even a little ridiculous.

Yesterday I made a study of a beggar in four or five hours. A life-size head. It is necessary, from time to time, to try very rapid sketches to limber the hand.

I seem to be in exile; the days are so long under this gray sky, and as I can sleep but little on account of the mosquitoes, I feel weak and can not work.

I imagined I should find a mass of adventures at Seville, but I am so bored that I stay shut up at the hotel, and it rains.

No love, no poetry, not even youth—nothing! It is true that there is nothing in my life at Seville. It seems to me that I am buried, as I was in Russia last summer. All these marvels! For what? And painting? Here are five months that I have not been in the studio; and of these five months, with

Digitized by Google

all my travels, I have lost three. I, who have so much need of work! Breslau's mention has awakened in me a world of thoughts, or, rather, has brought near to me, has made possible, has translated into actual life, this dream of a medal at the *Salon*, which appeared so distant that I thought of it in my day dreams, as I dreamed of having the cross of the Legion of Honor, or of being Queen of Spain. When Villevieille came to announce to me the probability that Breslau would receive a mention, she appeared to think that that made me— In short, others, by admitting that I could dare to think of a recompense for myself, have given me the audacity to think of it, or, rather, to say to myself, that since others think that I dream of it, it must be that it is possible—in fact, here are five months that I have been dreaming of it.

I seem to ramble, yet everything dovetails together. The study of Lorenzo's house may work up into a picture.

Thursday, October 26th.—Oh, happiness! I have left that frightful Seville!

I say the more "frightful," because I have been at Granada since yesterday evening; have been on the go since morning, and have already seen the inevitable cathedral, the Generaliffe, and a part of the vaults of the Bohemians. I am full of enthusiasm. At Biarritz and at Seville my wings were clipped; everything seemed at an end—dead. During the three hours I passed at Cordova, I had the impression of an artistic city, that is to say, I could have worked there with entire delight. As to Granada, there is but one grief, and that is not to be able to stay six months—a year. One does not know which way to go, there are so many things to do and see—streets, silhouettes, views. It makes me long to be a landscape painter. But then, those strange and interesting types appear, such striking, warm, and harmonious colors!

But the most curious thing I have seen is the prison of Granada, the prison where the convicts work. I do not know how the fancy came to me to go there, and certainly I do not

Digitized by Google

regret it, although one leaves the place with a pressure through the temples, as after a bull-fight. The commander of the prison at once acceded to the desire of the noble strangers, and they showed us everything. A guard walked in front, and we were flanked by a corporal's guard of six, chosen from the bravest criminals, armed with sticks, and detailed for the service. I can not describe the impression caused by this troop of men, standing up and taking off their hats with a rapidity that resembled fear, before the gold braid and batons of the guards. The latter are accustomed to beat them, if the guide is to be believed.

Disarmed, shut up, forced to work like children, these men inspired me with pity, instead of making me think of the crimes and misdemeanors which had caused them to be incarcerated. I will say more: It is almost tenderness—a singular tenderness, that one feels in presence of that horde of wretches, who bow with such an humble manner; who seem to work with so much zeal, and show us the primers in which they learn to read, and all this with timid, infantine airs.

Yes, they are flogged; that can be seen. They have the look of those poor street dogs that lie down resignedly to receive blows.

But what heads! I should really like to make a picture there. I have permission, and if I find some corner, with three or four persons—unhappily, that leads you on to too large a picture.

I advise all travelers to visit this sombre prison before seeing the Generaliffe, whose gardens are a foretaste of Paradise, certainly. Ah! how to describe those tangles of rose laurels, of oranges, of the richest and most exquisite plants, those cypress alleys, those arabesque walls covered with roses, those brooks flowing through banks of violets! Go to the prison, then to the Generaliffe.

To-morrow I shall devote to the Alhambra, and the head of a convict I am going to paint.

Digitized by Google

Friday, October 28th.—I have passed my day in the prisons of Granada. The prisoners enjoy much liberty. The court resembles a market. The doors do not have the appearance of shutting tightly; in short, this prison does not resemble the descriptions of the convict stations in France.

My poor convict posed very well all day; but as I made the head life-size, and sketched the hands in a day (sublime genius!), I have not rendered the astonishingly ambiguous character of this individual as accurately as usual, and I do wrong to lay it to the lack of time. That I am not better satisfied is owing to the light, which changed several times, and also to those good convicts of whom I had constantly a dozen at my back. They came in relays, but they were always there, and it is annoying to feel eyes behind you. The excellent deputy had put chairs behind me, as at the theatre, in the room in which I worked, for his friends, who succeeded each other there during the whole day. Each moment there was a knocking at the door; it was the prisoners—*those not bad*—the corporals, who asked to come in and were permitted to do so. The interpreter and Rosalie stayed there all the time, and through them I learned that a man who killed his wife is going to be strangled publicly next week. Then, there is a prisoner locked up for refusing to kneel before a religious procession, and other astonishing things. Have you ever marked that when one says, as I did just now, *and other astonishing things*, or *there were other things quite as remarkable*, or again, *what I say here is nothing compared to the rest*, it is always because one passes over nothing, even that which is worst; that one has said what is most striking, and there is nothing else to be said, and that one wishes to make an impression, Very often, speaking of a person, one cites his worst action, saying: "This is something that is habitual to him; judge, then, what his grave sins must be." But let us return to my convict. I had supposed him guilty of the most heinous crimes, and all he did, it seems, was to pass counterfeit money.

Digitized by Google

The idea of his relative innocence has prevented me, perhaps, from giving him the criminal appearance which he really has, for he has a head capable of anything, so I am going to weave a little romance about him which I shall tell in Paris. The balconied window looked on the court, and all those poor fellows looked through at the model, and the easel, and the painter, with Spanish avidity. When I came away, they gathered like starved dogs about the easel, with wide-open eyes, hands joined together, and exclamations of amazement at their comrade's portrait.

As he crossed the threshold, the deputy had the complacency to show the canvas to the whole court-yard of convicts who stood on tiptoe to look at it. Then he carried it to the superintendent, and to the warden, who descended to bow me into my carriage. Then, with the deputy walking in front of the horses, we stopped in front of the house of another dignitary of the prison, who came out to see the picture, and, after the deputy and warden had renewed the assurance that they would be pleased to have me repeat my visit, I at length started off to take a drive with my aunt.

I have written on the corner of my canvas "Antonio Lopez, condemned to death October, 1881, for murder and counterfeiting." Poor man! however, I have calumniated him under a pseudonym. His name may be Roderigo, or Perez, or even Lopez. I have represented him at his knitting; the most of these amiable citizens—that is to say, all those who are not employed in the shops at carpenter work, cabinet-making, shoe-making, etc.—knit stockings, like peaceable housewives.

The convict condemned to death walked about the court-yard as unconstrained as those who were only in for a year or two, for some bagatelle.

Several of these gentlemen prefer domestic cooking to the meals served at the establishment, and their gracious consorts bring them extraordinary dinners, which Coco surely would not touch—Coco, surnamed *the assassin*, no one ever knew

Digitized by Google

why, and who, each time that his companions acted toward me as did Francis I. with Titian, jumped on them without barking, so as to bite the more surely.

Saturday, October 29th.—At last I have seen the Alhambra; I made it a rule not to linger before the most beautiful objects; first, not to become wedded to Granada; and, secondly, because the guide who took us marred my artistic enjoyment by his presence. I am determined to return to this country once more before I die.

Granada, seen from the tower, is completely beautiful. There are mountains covered with snow, gigantic trees, exquisite plants and flowers, the clear sky, and Granada itself, with its white houses basking in the sun; and in the midst of all these beauties of nature the Arab walls and the towers of the Generaliffe and of the Alhambra! And in the distance there is a vast horizon resembling the sea; in fact, nothing but the sea is wanting to make this the most beautiful country in the world.

The Arab costume, certainly, is the most picturesque of any. Nothing is comparable to the proud elegance of these superb draperies. I am haunted by the thought of the late Boabdil and his Moors, whom I imagine walking about in this incomparable palace.

This afternoon I made a study in a small street, and on completing it wrote on the wall: "Here Audrey worked, 1881." But the shadow on the right of the sketch is of too warm a tone, which mars the effect of the brilliancy of the light, and it grieves me. Would you imagine that it was cold, and my fingers were so stiff that I had to go and warm myself in the sun? I am not encouraged to stay here since I can not work in the open air. Why do I stew and shiver here; pass terribly dull evenings; stay awake in these infamously hard beds; and eat daily only a plate of soup and a piece of bread, with a cup of coffee in the morning? Because I wished to take away at least one good sketch.

Digitized by Google

Sunday, October 30th.—I passed the whole day at the gypsy camp, and to no purpose. The weather was glacial, my face was chapped with the cold, my canvas covered with sand and dust; in short, I accomplished nothing. But what a valuable lesson it is for an artist to stay there a whole day to seize those attitudes, those groups, those effects of light and shade! They are very well disposed toward foreigners because the Spaniards despise them. You could come for two or three months and make sketches daily, and there would be always material left. I rave over these gypsy types. They have postures, motions, and attitudes of such a natural and peculiar grace. Marvelous pictures could be painted here. Your eyes fly around in every direction, as they say in Russian; everything is a picture. It is exasperating to have come so late; but in spite of the strongest desire to do so, it is impossible to work; the wind from the snow-covered mountains is piercing and can not be withstood. But it is beautiful, beautiful, beautiful! When I started in to work, the gypsies rushed up and grouped themselves all around on the natural steps of the mountain—imagine what a favorable condition—and their curiosity is entirely sympathetic, while the people who surrounded me in the street the other day annoyed me intensely. The Spaniards do nothing; the result is, that instead of coming up to look and passing on, a mass of them stay behind you two or three hours. And, mark you, I worked in a deserted street, in a diabolical wind; and there are a great many painters here.

Granada is as artistic and picturesque as Seville is *bourgeoise*, notwithstanding it possesses a celebrated college. All the streets of Granada, or almost all, are a painter's delight.

One is dazzled and thrilled in every sense. One can stop at hazard and paint what is in front of him, and it will be a picture.

I want to come back here next August, and remain through September, and the first half of October.

Digitized by Google

Monday, October 31st.—I am glad the cold drives me away, otherwise I should not leave, and I ought to return. It is five months since I have seen Tony; and a studio must be rented to paint my picture for the *Salon* without hurry, and in my best vein. The first year it amounted to nothing. Last year you know how short the time was, etc., to say nothing about the subject not being mine. But this year I believe I have something of interest.

I shall paint Lorenzo's bric-a-brac shop with a staircase in the background, and a bright light, with a woman arranging carpets on a sort of dais; in the foreground another woman is rubbing up copper work, in a stooping posture, and the proprietor watches her, standing with his hands in his pockets smoking a cigar.

The women shall be clothed in their ordinary chintz dresses, which I shall buy on our return to Madrid. And I have nearly all the stuffs necessary. The dais must be set up, and that will cost 100 francs. Well, I start this evening and I can not help singing from joy.

My trip to Spain will have served to cure me of the habit of eating for the sake of eating, which takes up time and dulls the intellect. I have cultivated an Arab abstinence and only eat what is absolutely necessary, just enough to sustain life.

The son-in-law of the gypsy chief, at whose camp I painted, had just come out of the galleys, where he had passed four years—for abducting a little girl thirteen years old.

Wednesday, November 2d.—Here we are again at Madrid, which I have been anticipating for a week, and I shall spend three days making a new study of Lorenzo. After having heard me talk continually of my plan, and having seen my impatience to return to Madrid, it is entirely natural, is it not, that my aunt, in street costume, should come and say to me: "Well, are we going to spend the day shopping?" And as

Digitized by Google

I replied that I was going to paint, she appeared absolutely astonished, and told me that I was insane.

An idea comes to me; I think I have hit on a good subject; my dream begins to take a bodily shape; I commence my sketch, entirely absorbed in my work, ransacking my head for harmonious combinations; and as I am chasing up some idea—which is still very vague and may escape before I can seize it—my dear family arrives, my family who love me so and are so uneasy when I cough. I am not over-sensitive; I deem myself very practical, compared with other artists—although I am not enough so, as you know. Oh, stolid and stupid family! they will never comprehend that one less strong, less energetic, less exuberant than I, would be dead already.

Saturday, November 5th.—I am in Paris to my immense delight. I counted the hours shivering in the car. The sharp air and the brilliant sun of Spain make the gray calm of this handsome city seem delicious to me, and I regard the ceramics at the Louvre with pleasure—the mere thought of them used to bore me.

Julian believed that I would not return until much later, and ill, and perhaps not return at all.

Ah! how sweet is sympathy, but painting is above everything.

Sunday, November 6th.—The lawsuit is ended and won. That is to say, the trial showed that there was no cause of action. It seems impossible, it has been pending so long; nevertheless, it is true. We have just received a dispatch from mamma. This is a happy day.

Tuesday, November 15th.—I have told Julian of a plan I have for a picture—and he approved of it. But he no longer inspires me with confidence, he appears mazy. At least, I imagine all this.

Tony remains to me, but I have cultivated him less and—well, we shall see.

Digitized by Google

Poor Colignon died more than three weeks ago.

We never cared for each other much, but toward the last she was so unhappy that, though I did not care for her, I pitied her.

Thursday, November 17th.—Yesterday, I could not drag myself about, on account of a cold, a cough, and pains in my chest, my throat, and my back; I could swallow nothing, and alternated ten times between a chill and a fever.

I am a little better to-day, but that is poor consolation for one treated by the greatest doctors in the world; and for such a long time, too; ever since I first lost my voice I have been under treatment. Yes, behold the ring of Polycrates which I throw into the sea in spite of myself! Well, since this frightful malady has such a grip upon me, it would be only justice if I were to have all sorts of luck in other directions.

It will not be said that I possess all good things, no matter what heights I attain.

Monday, November 21st.—Potain was sent for Wednesday, and he came to-day. I might have collapsed in the interval.

I knew well that he would send me to the South again, and in anticipation, I had my teeth set, my voice trembled, and I repressed my tears by a great effort.

To go South is to surrender, and the persecutions of my family make it a point of honor with me to keep up at all hazards. To go away—that means the triumph of all the vermin of the studios.

"She is very sick; they have taken her South."

Tuesday, November 22d.—It is impossible to imagine how exasperating for me is this exile in the South. It seems as if everything were at an end for me, who had returned intoxicated with the idea of keeping still and working, working hard without let up, following the inspiration—and now, everything is blotted out anew.

And while others will be constantly advancing, in the midst

Digitized by Google

of this artistic Paris, I shall be down there doing nothing, or trying to paint a picture in the open air, which is something horribly difficult.

Look at Breslau, it is not her peasant woman that brought her any reputation. In a word, my heart cracks and breaks in front of all this.

This evening I saw Charcot, who said that the disease has not advanced since last year; the trouble with me the last week has been simply a severe cold, which is not at all dangerous, and will soon disappear. As regards the South, it is the same; I must go away or shut myself up exactly like a prisoner. Otherwise, I run the risk of serious illness; my right lung is affected, and yet it seems there is hope for me; my disease is not incurable; it is confined to one spot and does not grow worse, in spite of all my alleged imprudences. They told me the same thing last year, and I would not even listen to them; now I hesitate, and spend hours crying, as yesterday, at the idea of leaving Paris again and breaking off my work.

It is true that if I am often as I have been these last few days, Paris will not do me much good.

This is what makes me desperate!

Surrender, acknowledge myself vanquished; say: "Yes, the doctors are right! Yes, I am very ill!"

Ah, no, decidedly everything goes wrong!

Saturday, November 26th.—I intended to go to Tony, you remember, to work under his eyes, and to show him my sketch and decide upon something, but I have not started out. I am weak and can eat nothing, probably due to my constant fever. It is terribly sad to be kept in inaction by—by I know not what; in a word, to have no strength. Charcot came again.

Mamma and Dina arrived yesterday, summoned by my aunt's insane dispatches. This morning, Dina received a letter from her sister, asking how I was getting along.

Digitized by Google

I have taken cold, I know; but that can happen to anybody.

And then; no, all is ended. My ears are in a sad state from this cold and this fever. To what can I aspire? What can I obtain? There is nothing further to hope for. It is as if a veil had been torn the other day; five or six days ago. All is ended, all is ended, all is ended!

Tuesday, November 29th.—Well! This has lasted a fortnight, and will, probably, continue as much longer.

Madame Nachet brought me a bouquet of violets to-day, and I received her, as I do everybody; for, in spite of a fever which has not left me for two weeks, and a pulmonary congestion on the left side, *alias pleurisy*, and two blisters, I do not capitulate—I get up and act like a well person. Only the quinine makes me deaf. The other night I thought I should die of fright when I discovered that I could not hear my watch tick. And I must keep on taking the stuff!

Otherwise, I feel almost strong; and were it not that I have not been able to swallow anything for a fortnight, I should not feel ill at all.

Ah! my work—my picture, my poor picture! It is the 29th of November, and I can not begin before the end of December. I shall not have time enough in two months and a half. What ill-luck! and, when one is born unfortunate, how impossible it is to resist! Look at me; painting seemed a refuge, and here I am, at times, almost deaf; hence, a frightful bother with the models, perpetual anguish, and an inability to paint portraits without acknowledging my weakness, which I have not the courage to do. Besides, with this illness, it is impossible to work, and I am obliged to stay shut up for a month. The whole thing is too melancholy!

Dina stays with me constantly! She is so kind.

Paul and his wife arrived yesterday. The Gavinis and Géry came, and Bojidar and Alexis. I keep constantly on the lookout, and avoid scrapes by means of courage and chaff.

The doctors are the victims of my pleasantries at present.

Digitized by Google

Potain, not able to be here constantly, sends me a doctor, who comes daily.

And that amuses me; for I play mad, and profit by that state, to indulge in insane ravings.

Wednesday, November 30th.—Julian came yesterday evening; he thinks me very ill. I saw it from his somewhat affected gaiety; as for me, I am profoundly melancholy. I do nothing; and my picture! But, above all, to do nothing! Do you understand this despair? I stay here with my arms folded, while the others work, make progress, paint their pictures!

I thought that God had left me my painting, and I had devoted myself to it as a supreme refuge; and behold, it fails me, and I can only cry my eyes out.

Thursday, December 1st.—Friday, December 2d.—Already it is the 2d of December. I should be at work seeking fabrics, and the large vase which is to figure in the background. What is the use of these details? Only to make me weep. I feel much stronger, I eat, I sleep, I am almost as strong as usual.

But the lower part of my left lung is affected. The right lung, the chronic one, is better, it appears; but that does not console me. This frightful illness, which can be cured, will keep me shut up at home *for some weeks yet.* It is enough to make me drown myself.

Oh, it is cruel of God! I had annoyances, family disagreements; but these did not harrow me to the bottom of my soul, so to speak, and then I had tremendous hopes. I lost my voice—the first personal attack—then I became used to that, resigned myself to it, rose above it, consoled myself for it.

Ah, since you accommodate yourself to all that, the means of working shall be taken away from you!

No studying, no painting, nothing more, and a delay of a whole winter for me who had put my whole life into my work. Only those who have been in my position can comprehend me.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, December 7th.—What exasperates me is my illness. Yesterday, that horrible Potain (who comes every day, as the great man can only inconvenience himself twice a week) asked me, in a casual manner, if I were getting ready to travel?

Their South! Oh, the idea alone completely upsets me. I could not eat any dinner, and if Julian had not come, I should have cried with rage all the evening.

Well, never mind what happens, I will not go to their South!

Friday, December 9th.—There is a drawing from Breslau in the *Vie Moderne*. If I had not cried so much, I might have used the time of my illness in making sketches and outlines; but my hand still trembles a little.

My lung is better; but my temperature continues to be over 100°.

I feel myself lost, and I do not dare to ask any questions for fear of hearing what Breslau is about to produce.

Oh, my God, hear me, give me strength, have pity on me!

Thursday, December 15th.—I have been ill four weeks and two days. I made a scene by crying before Potain, who did not know how to calm me; for, leaving aside the subterfuges, and cock-and-bull stories, and other exquisite things with which I regale his imagination, I set to bewailing myself, and, with my hair tumbled, shed genuine tears, and lisped infantine woes, talking like a little girl. And to think that I worked myself up in cold blood, and did not really think what I said! Whenever I attempt to play this sort of a part, I am actually pale, and I cry; in fact, it seems to me that I could make an astonishing actress; but I cough and have not the necessary amount of lung-power at present.

My father arrived this morning. Everything passed off very well, no one but Paul's wife was entirely upset, but then she feels toward him an indifference which amounts almost to hostility. As for me, I maintained a becoming demeanor. I gave him a very handsome emerald, a gift from mamma, that I did not know what to do with.

Digitized by Google

I felt a grain of regret afterward. I might have given it to Dina, who adores jewels; but, pshaw!

I do not say that papa is a bore; on the contrary, he resembles me a little in mind, as he does physically (this is a compliment for him); but that man never will comprehend me!

Imagine that he has a scheme of taking us back with him for Easter!

No! That is too outrageous, and the indelicacy is too great. With my health, to talk of taking me to Russia in February or March!!! You can appreciate it. Let it go! Without mentioning all the rest! Oh, no! for me who refused to go South? No, no, no! By all means let us say no more about it.

Sunday, December 18th.—I poured forth my woes to Julian, and he endeavored to console me by advising me to make sketches every day of the things that impress me. The things that impress me? And what could I find in my surroundings? Breslau is poor, but she lives in an eminently artistic atmosphere. Maria's best friend is a musician; Schaeppi is original although vulgar; and besides, there is Sara Purser, painter and philosopher, with whom she has discussions on Kantism, on life, on the *ego*, and on death, which compel reflection, and engrave on the mind what has been read or heard. Everything about her, even to the quarter in which she dwells, is artistic. But my own quarter is so respectable, so uniform, where one sees neither a beggar-woman, nor an untrimmed tree, nor a crooked street. Then I murmur against riches? No, but I allege that easy circumstances prevent artistic development, and that the surroundings are half of the man.

Wednesday, December 21st.—To-day, I went out! Oh! in furs, with the windows closed and a bear-skin around my feet. Potain said this morning that I could go out if there were less wind, and I took precautions. The weather is splendid, and the precautions!

Digitized by Google

But that is no longer the question, it is "Breslau with a firm grip on her prey"—my *Salon* picture has flashed in the pan. Yes, what could I have to rival her picture of last summer?

That girl is a power; she is not the only one, I acknowledge; but we came from the same cage, not to say from the same nest, and I divined and foresaw her success and foretold it from the first; I who was ignorant then, extremely ignorant. I despise and disown myself; I do not understand why Julian and Tony say what they do. I am nothing, I have *rien dans le ventre* (oh, Zola!*). In comparison with Breslau I seem to myself a small, brittle, pasteboard box, next a massive oaken coffer, richly sculptured. I am in despair, and so convinced that I shall never succeed, that, if I were to speak of it to the masters, they would be gained over.

But I will struggle on, all the same, with my eyes closed, and my arms stretched out, as one about to be engulfed.

Thursday, December 29th.—I have not written a word for over a week; that shows you that my glorious existence has rolled on between a little work and society. There is nothing new; nevertheless, if I feel well, I go out; I have gone to try on gowns and to the Bois, and to Julian's Saturday with mamma and Dina. And Sunday to church, so that people would not say that I am at death's door, which the charming Berthe tells everywhere.

On the contrary, I am rapidly recovering; my arms, which were so thin ten days ago, are becoming round, that is to say I am much better than before my illness.

A week more of this and the fattening must be stopped—I shall have reached the proper weight—for I do not wish to become so stout as I was three years ago. Julian, who came yesterday evening, considers me much improved. We laughed the whole evening. I am doing the portrait of Paul's wife. Yesterday, there was such a return of strength that I wished to

* This expression is originally Balzac's. It occurs in *Illusions Perdues*.—A. D. H.

Digitized by Google

do Dina, Nini, and Irma at the same time. Irma is not an ordinary model, she is a type—extinct, they say—of the *grisette;* she is droll and sentimental, with a sort of artless viciousness. "When you have become a *cocotte*," I said to her the other day. She replied, "Oh, as for me, I have not luck enough for that!"

She poses intelligently. One can make much of her with her astonishing pallor; she is a candid young girl, as well as an abyss of depravity like all those women.

She asked permission to remain, though not posing, and passed the afternoon knitting before the fire.

Friday, December 30th.—Everybody has been quarreling all day.

At last, to counteract the effect, I went to Tony's, to show him the outline of the portrait of Paul's wife. He thought it very original in arrangement and well begun. That most sympathetic of Tonys showed his delight at seeing me in good health, and, after chatting gaily, we touched on the very grave subject of art, and of Breslau, among others.

"Her picture is certainly very good," he said; "she is very talented."

Oh, this paper is incapable of interpreting me! All my fire and fever—oh! to work day and night all the time, all the time, and produce something of importance! I know that he said that when I will it I shall do as much as she. I know that he considers me quite as talented; but I am ready to weep, to die, to flee, no matter where. But what will anything avail?

Ah! Tony has confidence in me, but I have no confidence in myself. I am devoured with the desire to do well, and I know my impotence. There I stop. If you believe me literally, you will believe only the truth. I say this with the desire of being contradicted.

Oh, Lord! I write all this and spend my time seeking literary expression for my torments, and Breslau, less of a fool, draws and works.

Digitized by Google

1882.

Monday, January 2d.—My painting roused me to enthusiasm; I do not feel worthy to say "my art." To talk of art (and its aspirations or inspirations) one must be already celebrated; otherwise, one has the air of a ridiculous amateur, or, rather, there is something indelicate in the assumption which wounds the better part of my nature. It is as if one boasted of a good action—false shame, in short.

Wednesday, January 4th.—Julian passed the evening bantering me on my admiration for Tony and the feeling I had inspired in him. At midnight we had chocolate. Dina was very pleasant. I can understand reserving one's graces for *connoisseurs.*

I always arrange my costume with particular care for the artists, and make it something entirely different from my ordinary dress—long robes without corsets, draperies, etc. In society, my waist would not be considered slender enough nor my dress sufficiently in style; thus all my prettiest phantasies, too extravagant for society, serve to minister to the fine arts. I continually dream of being the mistress of a *Salon* full of celebrated people.

Friday, January 6th.—Art, even in the humblest, elevates the soul and gives something that is lacking to those outside of the sublime brotherhood.

Wednesday, January 11th.—We are to give a *soirée* to-morrow, the eve of our new year. We have been preparing for it for a week; we have sent out more than 250 invitations, for our friends have asked for a great many. As no one is receiving yet, it is an event, and I think the gathering will be very

Digitized by Google

stylish, and it will be altogether a fine affair. Etincelle has spoken of it in her column in *Figaro*, accompanying the notice with a dithyrambic in honor of Mademoiselle Marie, pretty, a painter, etc. She is charming; if she had written nothing, I still should think her the most charming of ugly women; she is more seductive than fifty pretty women, and she has that stamp of distinction which is peculiar to the Parisian celebrities. Mark well what I say, for it is very difficult to grasp. All people who are celebrated and live in the public gaze, whether men or women, young or old, all have a certain note in the voice, a certain air which is the same in all, and which I shall call the family air of notability.

We are to have the two Coquelins. The elder, the friend of Léon, came yesterday to see the rooms and consult on the choice of pieces. G— was there and tired me with his affected airs; he came near giving advice to Coquelin, who is very agreeable—let it be said here, a good fellow—and does not make you feel for an instant that embarrassment which many people feel in presence of a stranger who is a celebrity.

Friday, January 13th.—The two Coquelins were superb, and the *salon* presented a charming spectacle, with all the pretty women present: first, the ravishing trio, the Marchioness of Reverseaux, daughter of Janvier de la Motte; Madame Thouvenal, and Madame de Joly. The Countess of Kessler, and—oh, well, nearly all were pretty; to sum it all up, as was remarked by Tony, who did not come any more than Julian, a respectable set of guests. Madame de G— was charmed, and ended by dancing and waltzing, upon my word, with Count Plater.

First, we had a dinner. In the artist world was present the brother of Bastien-Lepage, who is still away. It is always the *brother*. Thursday we are going to see the real Bastien. And George Bertrand—last year he painted an admirable, a moving picture, entitled "The Standard." I admired it very much and he sent me a very polite note. I sent him an invi-

Digitized by Google

tation on behalf of "Pauline Orell." Pollack introduced him to me. It was amusing; he paid me great compliments, for notwithstanding I had hid them, Dina showed certain studies to a favored few. Carrier-Belleuse melted under my eyes, and toward the end of the evening became quite soft and sentimental, insisting on the cruelty of the device, *Gloriæ Cupido.*

There is a bachelor capable of falling very deeply in love; perhaps he is so already, but that will wear off; he sees the *Gloriæ Cupido*—and nothing else.

We had supper at 3 o'clock; nearly sixty people remained, and Gabriel sat at my right. Nini was charming, with her magnificent shoulders and a very pretty dress; Dina, mamma, and my aunt all looked well. I wore a dress designed by Doucet and myself together, an almost faithful reproduction of the "Broken Pitcher," by Greuze.

Hair flowing from a little knot tolerably high on the nape of the neck; great festoons of Bengalese roses were scattered over the skirt, which was made of silk muslin, short, and laid in pleats; bodice of satin, laced in front, very full, laid in loose, unfastened folds, fichu knotted across; overskirt of muslin lined with satin, opened in front and turned back in revers to form paniers, one of which was filled with roses. The whole produced a charming effect. That odious Potain followed me like a shadow and headed me off from dancing.

Sunday, January 15th.—There was a long article by Etincelle about our *soirée*, but, as we were anticipating it, we are not satisfied. She compares me to the "Broken Pitcher," and they fear lest that be taken for an insult at Poltava. People are too stupid! The article is very good; only, as she said two days ago I was one of the handsomest women of the Russian Empire, she was content this time with describing my dress, hence, I am disappointed.

I am absorbed in art. I think that, together with my pleurisy, I caught the sacred fire somewhere in Spain. I am developing from an artisan into an artist; it is an incubation

Digitized by Google

of celestial things which makes me a little flighty. I make compositions at night, I dream of an *Ophelia*. Potain has promised to take me to St. Anne, to see the faces of the insane; besides, an Arab—an old Arab, seated, and singing with a sort of guitar, haunts me, and I am thinking of a large canvas for the approaching *Salon*, a bit of the carnival; but for that I must go to Nice. Naples for the carnival, of course, but I must paint the picture in the open air at Nice, where I have my villa; and I tell you all this, and yet I want to stay here.

Saturday, January 21st.—Madame C— has just taken us to see Bastien-Lepage. We found several American women there; and little Bastien-Lepage, who is very small, and blonde, with hair worn Breton style, a turn-up nose, and the fluffy beard of a very young man. They showed us everything. I adore his painting, but it is impossible to revere him as a master; we feel like treating him as a comrade, and his pictures are there to fill us with admiration, awe, and envy. There are four or five, all life-size, and painted in the open air. They are altogether beautiful. One of them represents a cow-girl, eight or ten years old, in a field; a leafless tree, and the cow under it. There is an all-pervading poetry, and the little one's eyes have an expression of infantine and rural reverie that I can not describe. He seems like a good-natured, little man, very well pleased with himself—this Bastien!

I went back to help mamma entertain a large number of people. "That is the result of giving *soirées* in Paris," said one of our friends.

Sunday, January 22d.—I am possessed, for the moment, by the carnival; I make charcoal sketches. If one had the talent, this would be beautiful to execute.

Friday, January 27th.—Gambetta has fallen—that is to say, he is no longer minister; but that is nothing, in my opinion.

Only what is going on makes one wonder at the cowardice and bad faith of men! Those who rail at Gambetta, the oppo-

Digitized by Google

sition leaders, do not believe a word of all these idiotic accusations of dictatorship.

Ah! the infamies which are daily committed revolt me!

Monday, January 30th.—We are going to the villa Géry, at Nice. Saturday was a good day for me. Bastien, whom I had seen the evening before at the ball presided over by the Queen, for the benefit of the Breton life-savers, came, and stayed more than an hour. I showed him some of my work, and he gave me advice with a flattering severity. Besides, he said that I was *marvelously* gifted. This did not seem like a compliment; so I felt such a violent flood of joy that I was on the point of seizing the little man by the head and kissing him.

All the same, I am very glad to have heard it. He gave the same advice as Tony and Julian, and said the same things. Besides, is he not the pupil of Cabanel? Everyone has his individual style; but, as for the grammar of the art, that must be caught always from those who are called the classics. Bastien, or anyone else, can not teach his own peculiar charm. One learns only what can be learned; the rest depends on the individual.

Madame de Péronny (Etincelle) came, and I passed a delightful quarter of an hour between that superior woman and that great artist before my fire-place. I was overwhelmed with vanity and pleasure.

I did not pay any attention to the other callers, whom I left in the official *Salon* with mamma.

Nice.—We started at 8 o'clock in the evening, Paul, Dina, I, Nini, Rosalie, Basile, and Coco. The villa Géry is everything that is desirable, in the open country, and only ten minutes from the Promenade des Anglais; a terrace, gardens, and a large, comfortable house.

We found everything in readiness, and the agent, Monsieur Pécoux, awaiting us with bouquets.

I took a horse-car trip this evening which enchanted me. It is like Italy, and yet there is French gaiety, and without the

Digitized by Google

genre canaille of Paris. As I wrote to Julian, it is as convenient as Paris, and as picturesque as Granada; a few yards from the Promenade des Anglais, one finds costumes, rags, types, and wonderful coloring! Why go to Spain? Oh, Nice! Oh, the South; the Mediterranean! Oh, my beloved country, which hath caused me so much suffering! Oh, my first joys, and my greatest griefs! Oh, my childhood; my ambitions; my *graces!*

In spite of me, Nice will always represent to me the beginning of everything, and side by side with the sufferings that darkened my life at fifteen, there will be always the remembrance of my first youth, which is like the most beautiful flowers of life.

Tuesday, February 7th.—I am ruined. Wolff devotes a dozen most flattering lines to Mademoiselle Breslau.

But this is not my fault. One can only do one's best. She is wholly absorbed in her art; as for me, I design costumes. I dream of draperies, of corsages, of triumphs in Nicene society. I do not wish to say that I should have her talent if I did as she does; she follows her bent, and I mine. But my wings are clipped. I feel my impotence so strongly that I sometimes feel like giving up painting altogether. Julian said that I could do as well as Breslau, if I chose. If I chose—but how can I? Those who succeed by the *I will* are, unknown to themselves, sustained by secret forces which I lack, and to think that at times I not only believe in the future of my talent, but even feel the sacred fire of genius!! Oh, sadness!

Here, at least, it is nobody's fault; this is less exasperating.

There is nothing so horrible as to say to yourself, without this or that, I might, perhaps—Here, I think, I do all I can, and arrive at no result.

Oh, my God, decree that I deceive myself, and that my consciousness of mediocracy may be an injustice!

Friday, February 10th.—It has been so hard a blow that I have just passed three truly unhappy days.

Digitized by Google

I no longer work at my great picture, but at more reasonable things, simpler things, and studies. I have made a solemn resolution not to lose a minute, and not to do a stroke in the open air—*to concentrate myself.* Bastien recommends it to me, so did Julian, and so did that fortunate Breslau. Yes, truly fortunate, and to be as lucky as she is, I would give, unhesitatingly, everything that is called my happiness; and my riches, 10,000 francs income, to be independent and to have talent; with that, one has everything.

All the same, that girl is terribly fortunate! I feel so unhappy every time I think of that article by Wolff! Nevertheless, it is not what is called envy. I have not the heart to analyze it and try to find out just what the feeling is.

Monday, February 13th.—I began a picture Saturday. I have been looking for a subject for a fortnight. I tried two or three things but they did not get beyond the second sitting. It is always that way when the subject is not exactly right.

You resign yourself to a subject, not to lose time searching, then you think you can make something of it; besides, what is sought for rarely succeeds; what is found does not always succeed either, but at least you have the pleasure of an inspiration. When, then, will I persuade myself that the subject is nothing in unskillful hands?

Nevertheless, even for simple studies, what you do must please you; saying to myself that the subject should not preoccupy one, I undertook a picture which made me very unhappy for four or five days; I did not dare to drop it and I had not the heart to work; since I have renounced it I feel as though I were delivered from a heavy burden; I make sketches, and, for the first time, water colors; all my minutes are taken up and I have found a subject for my picture; for, in addition to the small things, I must take back a large study to Julian. It is three *gamins* by a *porte-cochère.* It seems to me extremely true and interesting. The blow of Wolff's article has done me good; I was crushed, annihilated, and the reac-

Digitized by Google

tion has made me understand things in art that tormented me because I did not find them while I doubted their existence. It has forced me to make a salutary effort; I also begin to understand what I have read of the struggles, sufferings, etc., of artists; I used to laugh at them as hollow romanticism. That famous *will* of Breslau I have called to my aid. I see that one must make great efforts to obtain results which I thought fell from the sky. The fact is, I have hardly made a veritable effort up to the present time. My extreme facility in work has spoiled me. Breslau obtains fine results, but very laboriously; as for me, when it does not come to me immediately, and *of itself*, I remain stupid. This must be conquered. So I have endeavored to force myself to a desired definiteness in sketches and charcoal compositions, and I have succeeded in doing things of which I thought myself incapable, and which I thought that others did by knack, and almost by sorcery; it is so difficult to accord to others faculties in which you, yourself, are deficient.

If I could continue to work as I have in the last few days, I should be very happy! It is not enough to work like a machine, but to be busy all the time, and to think of what you are doing, that is happiness. There is no pleasure like it. And I, who complain so often, come and give thanks to God for these three days, though trembling lest it may not last.

The whole aspect of everything is changed. Little inconveniences possess but little power to annoy me; I feel above them, with something radiant in my spirit. I feel a divine indulgence toward the vile multitude which ignores the secret, changing, undulating, and diverse causes of my beatitude, more fragile than the most fragile of flowers.

Tuesday, February 14th.—Ah! how we who have read Balzac, and read Zola, enjoy our powers of observation!

Wednesday, February 15th.—It is little by little that the eyes open; before, I saw only the design and the subject of pictures; at present—ah! at present, if I did but reproduce as

Digitized by Google

I see, I should have talent. I *see* the landscape; I see and love the landscape, the water, the air, the color—the color!

Sunday, February 19th.—If you knew what torments I suffer! I struggle against laziness and against this terrible, *it is going to be bad*, which prevents me from doing anything, and I suffer burning remorse for every hour lost. And why do I not make sketches, and this and that? And when I see the drawings in the *Vie Moderne* I turn red, and then pale, and wish, at the first stroke, to do as those do who have been drawing for ten years, not comprehending that one must work all the time and keep at it, and make bad pictures over and over again before one can make good ones.

Ah! what a terrible and dangerous moment it is when one leaves the regular and mechanical work of the class and feels the necessity of parceling one's self out, so to speak, and doing all sorts of things; when one is left to depend on one's own resources, and has to decide what must be done, what is lacking—in a word, to measure one's own capabilities.

It is a good sign, but it is exceedingly tormenting.

This has continued for several months, and the constant struggle would be abominable, were there not a vague hope that perhaps this is leading to some fine series of months, fecund in work, calm, mature, which will open new horizons, and then—

I recall that two or three years ago the fortunate Breslau passed through torments like mine. For whole months she could succeed in nothing, and I have seen her pass through horrible days, when she was ready to take to sculpture in despair.

Monday, February 27th.—After a thousand agonies I have destroyed my picture. The *gamins* would not pose. Charging these failures to my incapacity, I kept making new beginnings, until finally—as very fortunately these frightful monsters moved, laughed, shouted, and fought—I am making a genuine study, so as to be no longer tortured by pictures. Everything

Digitized by Google

I undertook, at the end of twenty-four hours, became blurry, or untrue, or common-place, or bungling, or pretentious, after having pleased me greatly in the first place. Besides, it is better to make simple studies. I am at such a critical point and have lost so much time—Biarritz, my illness, and a month here already!

If I had not rushed here, like a fool, after pictures, or, rather, if I had not been half-stunned by Wolff's few lines on Breslau! There is only one way to regain my feet, and that is to go back to things that will be pronounced very good; but we shall see!

Paris, Tuesday, April 20th.—Well, it is not as it was after Spain. I am not delighted to see Paris again—simply content; besides, I can not analyze any of my sentiments. I am so uneasy about my work. I tremble to think what people may say, and I am crushed by the remembrance of Breslau, who is treated by the public like an artist of established reputation. I went to Julian's yesterday (we arrived in Paris yesterday morning), and he no longer treats me as a serious worker. Brilliant, yes, but with no persistence, with no will power. He desired more; he hoped for something else. All this, in casual talk, pained me greatly. I am waiting for him to see the work I did at Nice, and I no longer hope for anything favorable.

I have made a life-size picture of Thérèse, a child of six, going after fodder, in a farm lane; then an old man, life-size also, at his window, beside a pot of red carnations; then a boy carrying a bag, half life-size; a landscape on a 12-inch canvas; another on a 4-inch canvas; three marines, five or six little studies, and some charcoal drawings, besides two unfinished pastels, and some pen-and-ink drawings in my album.

I do not know whether they are good or horrible, and all these fears make me feel as if fire were passing over the whole surface of my body.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, April 22d.—What is necessary to my very existence is to have it acknowledged that I possess great talent. I never shall be happy like all the world. As Balzac wrote: "To be celebrated and to be loved, that is happiness!" And yet, to be loved is only an accessory, or, rather, the natural result of being celebrated. Breslau is thin, crooked, faded, but her face is interesting. She has no grace, and is single and alone.

She will not become a woman of any importance unless she has genius. I, with her talent, would be the most famous person in Paris; but this must come. In my insane desire for this to happen, I seem to see a hope that it will happen.

After my long absence and my interrupted work, without advice and encouragement, I seem lost. I feel as if I had been in China. I am no longer in the swim.

Ah! I think that I love nothing like painting, which, in my eyes, would give me all other happiness! False vocation, false craving, false hope! This morning I went to the Louvre —but stop! I calumniate myself. One must have power to produce when one is the observer that I am. Formerly, I had the confidence of ignorance, but for some time my eyes have been opening. This morning it was the Paul Veronese's tower that appeared to me in all its splendor, and all its glory—that unheard-of richness of tones! How can it be explained that until now these splendors have appeared to me large, dingy, gray, and flat canvases? What I did not see once I see now. The celebrated pictures, which I used to look at with respect only, now charm and hold me. I feel their delicacy of coloring; I appreciate coloring at last!

I turned back twice to look at a landscape by Ruysdael. A few months ago I saw in it nothing of what I saw this morning. The atmosphere and the feeling of space are wonderfully delineated. In short, it is not painting; it is living nature. So, since I see all these beauties that I did not see before, it is because my eyes have become experienced. Perhaps the same phenomena may happen to my hand.

Digitized by Google

I do not mean to say that before I went to Spain I was absolutely without appreciation, but it is certain that that journey brushed away a film from my eyes. Well, now I must work in the studio; I have done enough independent things to limber my hand for the time being; at present I must attain execution of the first order and paint a picture.

Sunday, April 23d.—I have passed some minutes examining my studies I made at Nice. The bare thought that something good may be found among them sends a shiver down my back. Tony, Julian, Bastien, in themselves, appear to me so mean and small beside the immense effect that their words can produce upon me! Real anxieties and real joys are connected only with fame. Fame; what a glorious word!

My life is not what I would make it. Monday I shall go to the studio to break myself in again. It seems as if I had been idle for months, and that a misfortune had happened to me.

I have not done the best I could; I was in a hurry to get back to Paris. My thoughts pass through my head like great clouds, which overwhelm me with anguish, which make me cold, and cause, as it were, tongues of fire to impale me ten times an hour.

The sky is gray and stormy; it rains, and there is a piercing wind. The weather outside is in consonance with my own state of mind—a physical effect, then!

But I had something else to say; something concerning love, suggested by a book I read this morning.

Love is the eternal subject. To allow yourself to be loved by a man, who is enough inferior to you to consider you a goddess descended from the sky, would have a certain charm. To know that by a look you can bestow the utmost felicity; there is a charitable side to this which flatters the generosity you may possess.

Tuesday, April 25th.—My own anxiety was hard enough to endure, and I did not need to see the anxious faces of my

Digitized by Google

family watching me to see if I felt any emotion. In sum, this is what Tony said: The picture of Dina, in costume, was very good, very good; the man by the sea-side, very good also; and the head of Thérèse not at all bad, only the colors of the landscape do not blend well with those of her dress. The small landscape is very good; the clothes of the old man are very good, the old man is well drawn, but not simple enough and not enough—something else; to sum up, there is much good in what I have done. Well, do you say, you ought to be satisfied? Ah! he also added that I must make a very careful study, and that he will watch me very attentively, and that he is at my disposal whenever I call him. Well, afterward they gave him a cup of bouillon in the *salon*, fishing for a rhapsody on my immense talent; only, as he was due at the *Salon* committee at 5 o'clock (that is the reason that he selected to-day to come here, having to go to the *Salon*, which is close at hand), so, as he was in a great hurry, he limited himself to pitiful thanks for the glass of Marsala and the bouillon, and took a very hasty leave. Then my aunt said that he was an imbecile and had no sense; mamma added that it was truly astonishing that I should be so broken down at his treatment. It is true that I looked worried on account of their curious anxiety. I suppose all mothers are thus; but it is none the less a bore. In short, I am excited enough to cry, and come to pour out here the overflow of this poor heart.

I ought to be satisfied. No, I am almost broken down, and mamma is almost right. This is not enough; I wanted that man to say to me—to save me from becoming disheartened he should have said: *Well and good! success this time; this is excellent; you are as strong as Breslau, and have more talent than she.*

Anything short of the aforesaid words could not satisfy me or even lift me from the despair in which I have been plunged for a year on account of my painting. He said truly about the man on the sea-shore, that it was *very good, very good;* and he also said that the blending of the colors was very good; and also

Digitized by Google

the little landscape, which he looked at several times; also the pastel of Dina, and my own, which is good in part, and the head of Thérèse, which is *not at all bad.* Well, what do I ask then? I do not know—and first, he was in too much of a hurry, it seemed to me that he did not look enough. I wanted him to praise to the skies my extraordinary talent.

How unsatisfactory to me all this *good* was, as I still have on my mind the *very good* accorded Breslau for a little picture that she painted in Brittany two years ago.

And although he said the same thing to me for my little picture painted at Nice, it seems to me that it does not mean as much. Why? Before my departure for Nice, he said to me that Breslau's fisherwoman was very good. At present, when that same fisherwoman is received with the number three, he tells me simply that it is *not bad.* In short, I am not satisfied. Why? First, because my family founded such extraordinary hopes on these few studies, that the wildest compliments alone were capable of satisfying them, and then I am nervous, the effect of spring. When I am over-excited this way, my arms burn above my elbows; this is queer. Learned doctors, explain!

Saturday, April 29th.—I am not an artist. I have drawn without effort as I have done everything, but I can not—However, when I was a child three years old, I drew profiles with chalk on the whist tables, and afterward, and always (one would have been certain that I was cut out for an artist), and you see the result! But I have nothing to say, only time is flying and my hands are idle. Summing up the account, what has happened? Why, nothing—Breslau has been working longer than I, almost twice as long—admit that I am as talented as she, and things are taking their natural course; however, I have been painting for three years! but she has been painting for over five years!

Sunday, April 30th.—This morning I went to the private view with Villevieille, Alice, and Webb. I was dressed very

Digitized by Google

becomingly in black. I amused myself noting that I was tolerably well acquainted with all the best people in Paris. Carolus Duran came to talk to me—that very amiable man is a fascinator. Breslau's picture is hung on the top row and the effect is deplorable. I was so uncomfortable over the success I expected she would have that this is a great relief; I make no attempt to deny it. Her woe-begone friends came to ask my opinion; and I told them that it was not right, and that they ought to have given her a better place.

The culmination of this brilliant day was my conversation with Julian, in which he accused me of throwing myself away, and not fulfilling the magnificent promises, etc. In fact, he thinks me drowned, and I think so too, and we are going to try to fish me up. I told him that I was well aware of this deplorable state; that it fills me with despair, and that I think myself done for. He reminded me how good my work used to be, and that a sketch he has at his studio attracts everybody's attention. Oh, my God! help me out of this! help me out of this! I was going to say that God was good to me, in permitting me to be not altogether crushed by Breslau, at least for to-day. In a word, I do not know how to express myself to prevent this appearing like an unworthy sentiment. If the picture had been as I imagined, it would have been the end of me, considering the pitiful state my work is in at present. I did not, for an instant, hope that her picture would be judged a bad one; that would have been ignoble; but I trembled so, lest I should witness a formidable success. I had such emotions when I opened the newspapers, that perhaps God took pity on me.

Wednesday, May 9th.—Tony and Julian dined here. I arrayed myself in a fantastic toilet and the evening was prolonged until half-past 11. Julian is very droll after the champagne, and Tony very agreeable, very sober, very calm, with his handsome, tired face. I would like to rouse some genuine feeling in this man with his tender and melancholy

Digitized by Google

air. I can not imagine him carried away by violent sentiments; he is logical and calm, and if affairs of the heart were in question, he would give you a precise demonstration of the tender sentiment itself and its causes, as if he were explaining the qualities of a picture. But take him all together, and to sum up, as he says, he is charming.

The "Portrait of a Young Girl" by Sargent, haunts me; it is ravishing. It is an exquisite work that one would gladly put in a gallery with pictures of Van Dyck and Velasquez.

Saturday, May 20th.—Ah! I am discouraged! What have I done since I have been in Paris? I am no longer even eccentric—and in Italy, what did I do? Once I allowed myself to be kissed on the sly by that stupid A—. Well, what of it? Was it distasteful to me? But plenty of girls have done the same, and still do it, and no one is horrified. I assure you that when scraps of tattle come to me of what people say of us and of me, I feel stupefied, it sounds so preposterous.

The lawsuit has been disastrous, but it is finished. Now it is different, it is I whom they attack; and when very quiet and alone in my room, in the midst of my books, after having worked eight or ten hours, I think of what may be said of me; that I am morally dragged from this sepulchral place, disrobed, criticised, disfigured, that thoughts and actions are attributed to me—They put me down as twenty-five years old, and say that I am permitted a compromising independence, which is absolutely false. Ah, well! it makes me miserable and I want to cry.

Yesterday we went to the *Salon* with G—, Bastien's brother, and Beaumetz. Bastien-Lepage is going to paint a picture, representing a little peasant looking at a rainbow. I predict that it will be sublime. What talent, what talent!

Monday, May 22d.—I believe that I shall never love—but one alone—and he, it is probable, will never love me. Julian is right; to revenge myself, I must have an overwhelming superiority—make an exalted alliance with one of this world's

Digitized by Google

grandees, both rich and celebrated. This would be fine! or else have talent like Bastien-Lepage which would make all Paris turn their heads when I passed. I am charming; I talk as if this could happen to me. Oh, my God, my God, decree that I may have my revenge! I will be so good to all who suffer.

Thursday, May 25th.—This morning we went to Carolus Duran's. What an astonishing and charming person! People laugh at him a little because he does everything. What difference does that make? He is a good shot, rides horseback, dances, plays the piano, the organ, and the guitar, and sings. They say he dances badly, but he does all the rest with an infinite grace. He believes himself Spanish and Velasquez-like. His personal appearance is very seductive, his conversation is absorbing, and through and through he is such a good fellow, is so well satisfied with himself, so frank and happy in his admiration of his own person, that one takes no offense at him—quite the contrary. And if you sometimes laugh at him, you are conquered all the same. Especially when you think of all those who have great pretensions without possessing a quarter of his attainments.

He considers himself far above the common herd, but put yourself in his place; who would not have his head turned a little?

This morning, the studio was full of people; the light, coming from above, gave something of a mellowed look to this very modern studio; the visitors wore a solemn and admiring air, and Carolus played the master with all the assumed airs and graces of *Faure*, in "Don Juan" or "Rigoletto"; he went from group to group with his mustache curled, his beard pointed, his hair carefully mussed, and from time to time he sought his desk to jot something down with a haggard look and a rubbing of his forehead with his hand, as if his brain were throbbing with brilliant ideas. He is affected, of course; but I am always charmed when one

Digitized by Google

carves out for himself an interesting personality which makes you think of the departed age of romance. This *mélange* of music, the brush, and the sword is very interesting, and if, at the present time, it causes a disposition to laugh, so much the worse for those who laugh! Carolus Duran is right; the more so, as his talent justifies his posing and his pretensions.

And besides, people say that he is very successful with women.

He murmurs common-place compliments which please them.

"What did you find handsome at the *Salon* the other day?" I asked him.

"You were there, what else could one look at."

Or, as I complained of painting.

"Ah! art is terrible! You want to have it at your feet like men prostrated in the dust. Well, no! it resists you and you adore it."

True, he is a poser, a mountebank, whatever you will! But I do not hide the fact that I hold colorless people in horror, and so much the worse for those who see only the comic side of these exceptional natures all at once harlequins, posturers, and charming; you will hold up to my admiration, perhaps, men of superior talents who remain modest and quiet—ah! so much the worse for them and for us!

When heaven endows you with all gifts, you are an incomplete being if you stay still in your corner instead of taking advantage of your real value to play the harlequin a little, as the vulgar imbeciles say.

Friday, May 26th.—The way the prizes have been awarded is nauseating; among those who really deserved one, however, was Zilhardt.

But the idea that prizes were awarded to certain other people makes the heart bleed and fills you with anger! It would seem that artists ought to be more conscientious and more honest than other people. But this is by no means the case, I find, and it grieves me to the core.

Digitized by Google

Sunday, May 28th.—The Duchess of Fitz-James came to say that she would present us at her daughter-in-law's house in the evening. They gave a ball; mamma assures me that the lady is most amiable. They see each other tolerably frequently, but I do not know much about her. So we called for her, and went together.

It was of the greatest possible elegance; genuine society, genuine young girls, charming and fresh; genuine toilets. The old duchess has a large number of nephews and grandchildren. The names which I heard were among the best known and most aristocratic in Paris, and the few people that I knew moved in the highest circles. As for me, though enchanted to find myself in that *salon*, I thought all the time about a pastel, which I had done in the morning, and which I was afraid was poor.

Besides, one can not go into society that way. I should need at least two months of it before I began to enjoy it. But at bottom do you think that this amuses me? It is tolerably stupid, hollow, and colorless! And to think that there are people who only live for this! I wish for it but rarely; just enough to be in the swim, like celebrated men, for example, who only go there for relaxation; enough, however, to avoid the appearance of a Hottentot or inhabitant of the moon.

Monday, May 29th.—Yesterday we went to the Bois with Adeline, who says that we are launched in the most aristocratic society of Paris, and to-day we called on the queen, the two Duchesses Fitz-James, the Countess de Turenne, Madame de Briey, and lastly, on the American lady.

I saw Julian this morning; he finds my large pastel of Dina very good.

But the trouble is about a large picture for next year; my idea does not seem to take hold of Julian, who is a man about town, incapable of entering into the spirit of it. I am very much absorbed by it and dare not say so, for people of talent only are permitted to be absorbed by, and enthusiastic over, a

Digitized by Google

subject. With me, it is pretentious and ridiculous. I had thought of an episode in the carnival, but I have given that up. It would be only a display of color. I know exactly what I want to paint, and the subject has taken hold of both my heart and my brain. I first thought of it nearly two years ago. I do not know if I shall be far enough advanced this winter to do it well. Well, more is the pity, it will be a mediocre piece of painting, but it will have all the other qualities of truth, emotion, and sentiment. You can not do a thing badly that fills your soul, especially when you draw well—It is after Joseph of Arimathea has enshrouded the body of Jesus and the stone has been rolled before the sepulchre; the crowd has departed, night is falling, and Mary Magdalen and the other Mary remain alone seated before the sepulchre.

It is one of the most impressive moments in the sublime drama, and one of those which have been the least used by artists.

It possesses grandeur, simplicity, something awe-inspiring, touching, and human—an indescribable terrible calm; the exhaustion of grief in the two poor women. The physical side remains to be studied.

Saturday, June 3d.—The pictures have been passed upon; it is a pleasantry, there are only two in the first class, and they the worst; no medals. I think the professors are making fun of us.

From 3 to 5 we begged for charity on the grand staircase of the *Salon.* I was charming in a pale rose Louis XV. dress of uncut velvet. There was a good turn-out of society, Queen Isabella was very gracious to me. I saw many of my friends, and the sympathetic American lady gave me 20 francs. Many strangers also contributed. When I am not worried I have some beauty that attracts people. Three young artists, who had passed at a tolerably rapid pace, consulted after looking at me, and one of them came back to give me 40 sous! This was tolerably handsome, for people avoid the beggars and

Digitized by Google

hurry as fast as their legs will carry them, obliged as they are to pass between their ranks. At 5 o'clock, we went to the duchess; she took us to the Vicomtesse de Janzé, who has a house filled with marvels, and who is one of the queens of Paris, as Balzac says. And afterward to the Bois with the Duchess of Fitz-James and her grand-daughter, Mademoiselle de Charette.

Thursday, June 8th.—It is after 4 o'clock, it is broad daylight; I close the blinds hermetically to create an artificial night while the blue blouses of the workmen are passing in the street, going to their work already. Poor people! It is before 5 o'clock in the morning, and it rains; these unfortunates suffer, and we whimper over our misfortunes in laces from Doucet's. Look at me writing a common-place phrase, a banality. Each one in his own sphere suffers and complains, and each one has good reason for it. I, at the present moment, do not complain of anything; for, if I have no talent it is nobody's fault. I only complain of unjust, unnatural, detestable things, like much in the past, and in the present also, although this isolation may be a blessing which, perhaps, will bring me to fame. Happy Carolus Duran, who is celebrated and believes himself the most sublime artist of all time!

I wish to go to Brittany and work there.

Wednesday, June 20th.—Well! nothing new. A few calls exchanged and painting—and Spain. Ah, Spain! A volume of Théophile Gautier is the cause of all this. Is it possible? What! Have I passed through Toledo, Burgos, Cordova, Seville, Granada? Granada! I have run through those places whose names, even, it is an excitement to pronounce! It is a fever! Oh, to return there! To see those marvels again! To return alone or with people who can sympathize with me! I suffered enough when I went there with my family! Oh, poetry! Oh, painting! Oh, Spain! Ah! how short is life! Ah! how unhappy we are to live so little! For to live in Paris is only the point of departure for everything. But to make

Digitized by Google

these sublime, artistic journeys! Six months in Spain, in Italy! Italy, sacred soil; divine, incomparable Rome! it takes away my reason.

Ah! how women are to be pitied; men are free, at least. They have absolute independence in ordinary life, liberty to come and go, to start out, to dine at a restaurant or at home, to go on foot to the Bois or to a café; that liberty is the half of talent and three-quarters of ordinary happiness.

But, you will say, superior woman that you are, give yourself that liberty!

It is impossible, for the woman who emancipates herself thus —the young and pretty woman, be it understood—almost has the finger pointed at her, she becomes singular, commented on, insulted, and consequently still less free than before she shocked idiotic custom.

So there is nothing to do but deplore my sex and return to dreams of Italy and Spain. Granada! gigantic Arabs, pure sky, brooks, rose laurels, sun, shadow, peace, calm, harmony, and poetry!

Wednesday, June 21st.—It is all scratched out, and I have given away the canvas, in fact, so as not to see it. This almost kills me! Oh, painting, I can not attain unto thee!

But as soon as I have destroyed what I have finished, I feel relieved, free, and ready to begin again. The studio in which I have worked was lent to Mademoiselle Loshooths by an American, named Chadwick, who returned to-day, and we have restored to him his sanctum.

Thursday, June 22d.—The house at No. 30 Rue Ampère pleased me so much that I was wild over it, and as we have engaged an apartment already, I was maddened not to be able to rent the house, which appeared to promise me complete happiness.

A whole story to myself with a studio and balcony. My mother and aunt on the first story and the *salons* below. There is a garden in which I could paint out of doors without

Digitized by Google

leaving home. In a word, it was too good, I felt sure that no such good luck was in store for me. I was ready to pay 5,000 francs forfeit to the owner of the apartment. Well, it is done, and without forfeit; we can have the house, and behold me entirely cooled off. I find that it is far off, that the studio is not so large as I thought, that it is dear, and I am grieved, very much grieved to leave the Champs Elysées. Remark that, in living there, I had but one dream, the Avenue de Villiers and the artistic neighborhoods and the acquaintance of the artists. At present, that part of my dreams is realized. I am racked by the idea that if I get medals I shall owe them to my friends. And besides, there is this also: I have made a fuss because I had nobody to whom to show my drawings and pictures; in a word, I will say it, because my talent was unknown to the artists; at present, here are the artists but there is nothing more to show them. At 5 this evening we went to see the sketches of Bastien-Lepage, who is in London, but his brother Emile did the honors of the studio for us. I took Brisbane and L—, which resulted in a delightful hour, laughing, chatting, making sketches, and everything so befitting, so pleasant! If I had heard all this of Breslau, I should have bewailed myself and envied her her surroundings. Well, I have what I wanted, does that give me talent?

Friday, June 23d.—At 5 o'clock L—, Dina, and I were at Emile Bastien's, who posed for us. I painted him on a little panel ten or twelve inches square, I think.

I painted on the real Bastien's own palette, with his colors, his brush, in his studio, and with his brother for model.

But it is a fancy, childishness, superstition; the little Swede wanted to touch his palette. I kept some of his dried colors, and my hand trembled, and we laughed.

Saturday, June 24th.—It is accomplished. We have the house. I am heart-broken at leaving the Champs Elysées, without considering that the force of habit produces the effect of bankruptcy upon me. However, the house consists of a large

Digitized by Google

basement containing the kitchen and a billiard-room. The ground floor raised a dozen steps, contains a vestibule from which you enter through a handsome glazed door into an ante-room containing the staircase leading to the upper floors; at the right is a room which is made into a *salon* by an archway pierced into a little room opening out on the garden; there are also a dining-room and a garden, which carriages can enter, and reached by steps from the *salon* and from the dining-room.

On the first floor there are five chambers with dressing-rooms and a bath-room. As for the second floor, it is mine, and consists of an ante-room, two chambers, a library, a studio, and a store-room. The studio and the library are united by a very large archway, which gives a space 40 feet long and 22 feet in width.

The light is superb, coming from three sides and from above; in a word, for a rented house, nothing could be imagined to suit me better. But then it seems to me that it is out of the way, although it is within ten minutes' carriage-ride of the Madeleine by the Boulevard Malesherbes. It is No. 30 Rue Ampère, at the corner of Rue Brémontier, and the house can be seen from the Avenue de Villiers.

But what would you have? And then, this moving is most enervating. And think of leaving this apartment where I have been so quiet!

Ah! more is the pity! it is done; yes, signed at the notary's office.

Friday, June 30th.—I can not get settled. I am at sea. I do nothing! That is the misfortune! The other day, with Julian, we talked about this. He says that I have ceased to do anything for a year and a half; now and then a month of work by fits and starts, then nothing!

I have no continuity, no line of conduct, no real energy! It is true, I have wandered. I ought to have carved out my work, a study each week, and, instead of that, I try a score of things,

Digitized by Google

and when a subject pleases me, I am discouraged because I am not in condition to execute it. I have tried to return to class work and could not. Shall I be able to work alone? I am perplexed; I do not know where to go or what to do, and I lack the force to make a simple study; I must always undertake too much, and, as it does not turn out well, I fall into despair. And at present I am in a nervous state. Besides, I never shall paint! I have never, never, never been able to paint a bit well! Here are three years that I have painted; I have lost half of them, I admit, but that makes no difference. In the end I am out of breath; I must have the courage, the will to restore myself, that will come gradually. I am going to return— No, some great stroke would be necessary to put me at flood-tide, and I fear that this great stroke can be but a succession of patient efforts. But then comes this terrible convicton that I shall not be able; that I shall not paint.

Then model?

"You will return to painting, all the same, but still more weakened."

And what then? Then it were better to die.

Wednesday, July 12th.—I am arranging my famous picture, which is going to be very difficult to execute. I must find a landscape as near as possible like the one I imagine, and the tomb hollowed out in the rock. I wish I could do it near Paris, at Capri, it is altogether the Orient, a rock, and not so far away. But a real tomb would be essential. There must be some in Algeria, and above all, in Jerusalem—some Jewish tomb hollowed in the rock. And models? There I should have magnificent ones with natural costumes. Julian says that it is folly. He understands, he says, why the masters—those who know everything—should go to paint their pictures on the ground, for they go to seek the only thing they lack, local color, the naked truth; while I, in whom so much is lacking!—However, it seems to me that I must seek just that, since I could have success only by force of absolute truth.

Digitized by Google

Why, then, does he wish me to deny myself this local color, I who can have nothing else, or almost nothing? What will this picture signify if it is painted at St. Germain, with Jews from the Batignolles in made-up costumes? While there, I shall find vestments that are worn, in actual use, and genuine, and those tones found by chance and giving effects that can not be made to order. But time will be lost—in the trip, a fortnight; and a fortnight to get settled; total, a month. I shall start the 15th of September, I shall arrive on the 22d; the 10th of October I can begin; I give myself three months—a week to put things in position and draw, and a week for preparation. The 24th of October I shall begin to paint, and on the 1st of November the principal head will be finished. The body will occupy until the 10th of November. On the 11th I shall begin the other figure, which will take ten days. The 27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th of November will be occupied in painting the foreground. I allow myself ten days more for the background, which brings me to the 10th of December. Note that I have calculated for the whole work nearly double the time it is likely I shall spend upon it.

Tuesday, July 25th.—We had a charming evening, with everybody feeling at home; with quiet and interesting conversation, tinted, as it were, by serious and all-pervading music; only, nobody spoke to me of art. Fortunately, before dinner, Julian went up to the studio to take another look at the sketches, and the large panel, on which I have blocked out the face in charcoal and pastel.

"Is this what you call looking for a subject for your picture?"

"Yes, by all means, for this pleases me; while I could not interest myself in last year's subject, which was meaningless to me."

Oh, if I really could do it!!! Julian enters entirely into my idea. I did not think (and I was very wrong) that he comprehended so profoundly the beauty of the scene. Yes, it is

Digitized by Google

true. Out of it one ought to make something terrible in its calm; and desolate, profoundly desolate. It is the end of everything; the woman who is there is more than the expression of grief—she is the embodiment of an immense, complete, and dreadful drama. It is the stupor of a soul to which nothing remains, and considering the antecedents of the woman, there must be something so humane, so interesting, so grand, and so striking about her, that it will give you the impression of a wind blowing across your hair.

And I shall not do it well, *although it depends upon myself?* It is something that I can create with my hands, and my impassioned, tenacious, inflexible will would not suffice? The ardent, mad desire to impart the emotion which I feel would not suffice? Come, now! How can I doubt it? It is something that fills my head, my heart, my soul, and my eyes; and shall I not triumph over material difficulties? I feel capable of everything. There is only the chance of illness—I pray God daily that this may not happen.

Will my hand be impotent to express that which my head WILLS?

Ah! my God, I fall on my knees and supplicate Thee not to oppose this happiness. It is in all humility, prostrate in the dust, that I supplicate Thee to—not indeed aid me—but deign only that I may be permitted to work without too many obstacles.

Thursday, July 27th.—July 28th.—July 29th.—It seems to me, however, that it is impossible to paint this picture entirely out of doors! The effect is not full day, and the twilight hardly lasts an hour. Therefore, I shall not be able to *copy*, as is done in ordinary pictures, as Bastien-Lepage does, and all do who work in the open air. Ah! I am running against too great difficulties. Well, we shall see! I shall paint it in Algeria as well as I can, and then, if some things have to be done over again, or even if it has all to be done anew, I shall have learned how to do it, at all events.

Digitized by Google

Sunday, July 30th.—Monday, July 31st.—Robert-Fleury came this evening, and we had a conference regarding the picture, and in regard to work in general. I do not work the right way. For two years I have had no continuity in my ideas, and hence it never happens that I completely finish a study. That is true. He said so to prove to me that I made all possible progress, considering the way in which I work, and that the young people of the studio work more, and to better purpose. Nothing tells like tenacity and continuity, while a good week, and then nothing, does not amount to much; does not produce progress. But it is true I was ill, traveling, and without a studio. At present, everything goes well, and if I do not persevere it will be a proof that I am good for nothing.

The idea of the picture is good, and I shall execute it well. The painting of this week is done with freedom, but I tell you, that, to dispel my despair, he should have praised me more highly, said that I was as talented as—someone very talented—that I can do whatever I choose. And he tells me when I complain, that it is insanity, and that he never has seen a person do more in so short a time. Four years! Then he said that the most gifted and most fortunate do not achieve success under seven, eight, or ten years. Ah! it is atrocious!

There are moments when I could batter my brains out! Rhetoric furnishes no relief. I must produce something that will make people start with astonishment, nothing else will give me peace.

Monday, August 7th.—The street! coming back from Robert-Fleury's we drove by the avenues which surround the *Arc de Triomphe*, it was toward half-past 6 of a summer evening; there were porters, children, running waiters, workmen, and women; all these at the doors, on the public benches, or chatting before the wine-shops.

What admirable subjects for pictures! Altogether admirable! Far be it from me, of all things, to aim at a parody of the actual; let vulgarians do that; but in the every-day life of the

Digitized by Google

streets are to be found capital subjects. The greatest masters are only great through their fidelity to truth.

I am struck with wonder at all that is to be found in the street, and those who sneer at what they call naturalism do not know what it is, they are imbeciles. The thing is to catch nature in the act, to know how to select and to catch her. To know how to select is what makes the artist.

My portrait will be undeniably common-place. I am seated in a large arm-chair, in a dress of white muslin, half low neck. The pose is tolerably good. I appear to be talking, it is full face. It is very ordinary.

I return to the street. That mine could be worked. I do not want to touch the country. Bastien reigns sovereign there; but for the street there has been yet no—Bastien. And in our garden I could paint nearly everything.

Tuesday, August 8th.—My head is a little troubled by Daudet's "Kings in Exile;" I have read it already, but I am beginning it again. It contains ravishing pages, a delicacy of analysis and a clearness of expression that delight me, and things which make me weep—matters of sentiment.

The life that I lead is no life at all; when I do not work, there is nothing that I care for; while painting, I imagine I am weaving my happiness; when I am idle, everything turns into night and silence.

Wednesday, August 9th.—I had a sitting; afterward Robert-Fleury came to dinner. I showed him a sketch made this morning—a ragpicker whom I stopped on her round. Tony found it good. It is before me now. Tony says not to touch it, although it is barely blocked out, and to make another very much worked up. When, by chance, I do something passable, I feel the delight of a child.

I am in love with myself.

Thursday, August 10th.—That poor Tony rubbed out my left hand at the end of the sitting. It is of no avail to be an academician and to have received the medal of honor, one is

Digitized by Google

none the less liable to mistakes; and he wishes to have his first effort something very fine; he told me that he nearly had the nightmare and a sick headache, because he could not make it a success without painting some of it over.

Well, how I sympathize with these troubles that I know so well, and of which one has no idea without experience!

He writes a journal every evening as I do; what do you suppose he finds to say about me? He thinks that Breslau's laurels prevent me from sleeping. But he knows how deeply I recognize my own incapacity. It is true that now I say *my picture*, and still, that seems to me an assumption! It is only while hearing other nullities say, my sketch, my picture, etc., that I have dared—and if I consider this a species of impertinence, it is because I hope some day to have the right to say it, and do not wish to cheapen it by a too familiar use. You understand this, do you not?

Sunday, August 13th.—It is 3 o'clock in the morning; I can not sleep. This evening I showed Tony a study of a female ragpicker, which he pronounced "so so," and a new outline of the picture which he called very good. Upon the whole, the outline is not new; it is like the very first which I tore up and have reproduced. It seems to me that you should conceive a thing all at once, above all, something that strikes and takes complete possession of you. Now, Robert-Fleury is right; this picture is relatively easy to execute; there is nothing of what we call detail, since the action happens in a half light; the silhouettes stand out from a dark ground. Everything, understand, everything consists in seizing well the relations between the sky, the figures, and the ground; and afterward and above all, to render the poetry of the hour, the deep, awful desolation of what has just taken place.

Now, he says that it is *found;* that the attitudes are profoundly felt, *poignant*; everything consists in rendering this as I feel it.

Digitized by Google

"If you succeed in finding the exact tones, and the relations of the different parts, it will be something entirely beautiful."

Yes, that is all. On one side a sort of terror, and on the other side a frenzy.

It depends upon myself!

And then I went to bed at midnight, thinking no more about the discussions of the day on naturalism, painting, and the street! Thinking only of this picture, which takes abnormal proportions in my brain, and once my imagination set at work, everything has passed in review. I have worked; it is finished. I have sent it in; it is exhibited. And there is a crowd before it; emotion chokes my throat; a foolish fear, of I know not what; then an extravagant joy succeeds that anguish, and as I thought all this, I shivered, and the perspiration started all over me.

I got up at 3 o'clock. I read and now I write with the sketch before me. But, perhaps, I am preparing for myself a terrible disappointment. No, since I am sure of nothing, I am going to try. Besides, perhaps, it is the two cups of tea taken this evening which have prevented me from sleeping—Oh, no!

Tuesday, August 15th.—May God come to my help! I would I had not thought of it and had counted on nothing; the only happiness that happens to one comes as a surprise, and not when one is expecting it; but I expect nothing. Only the picture takes away my sleep. It might be so beautiful! I comprehend it so well!

Thursday, August 17th.—At the last sitting my artist was in search of a subject for a picture, something modern and good; and then he wished to have a nude figure in his picture; "only it is so difficult to find a beautiful model;" he appears to foresee such insurmountable difficulties. Really, one would say that a beautiful nude woman was not to be found in Europe.

I really believe that Robert-Fleury has a very just opinion of me. He believes me to be what I would like to have the

Digitized by Google

world think me—altogether proper; a young girl—a child, even—in this sense, that, while I talk like a woman in the full possession of her intellectual powers, I am really at heart as pure as an angel in heaven. I really think that he respects me in the highest acceptation of the term, and if, in my presence, he ever should say anything—well, anything free, I should be absolutely astounded. In a word, I always say that I talk about everything, but there are ways and ways of discussing things. There is more than the propriety; there is the modesty of language. Perhaps I really talk like a matron, but I employ metaphors and carefully-constructed phrases, so that, while really saying a thing, I have the air of not touching upon it. It is as if, instead of saying my picture, I said, the thing which I have made. Never, even with Julian, have I used the words—lover, mistress, intrigue; those precise, ordinary terms, which make it appear as if you were speaking of things with which you were familiar. Of course everybody knows about all that sort of thing, but one can glide round the subject. If one knew nothing, one would not be interesting, for there are corners of conversation, where a little malice and raillery, in regard to a certain little fellow called Cupid, are indispensable. With Robert-Fleury I talk principally on art, but, besides—in fact, this leads us to touch upon music and literature.

Well, I see that Tony Robert-Fleury takes my—what shall I call it?—enlightenment, in its true sense. That he finds it very simple, and that, if I have the frankness not to appear stupid, he has the tact never to say as much on the subject as I. Now let me add that you can not judge me from this journal, in which I am serious, and, so to speak, with my rouge washed off. When I converse, I appear better. In conversation there are certain little airs, half phrases, which mean so much! and glances of the eye that express more than words.

I am foolish and boastful. Here I am believing that this academician sees me as I see myself, and consequently, appre-

Digitized by Google

ciates all I intend to convey, as one would say about the playing of an actress. You are, of course, apt to exaggerate your own merits. You attribute good qualities to yourself, even when you are totally devoid of them. Well, admitting this, I tell you that it is very agreeable to believe yourself appreciated. And then, with Robert-Fleury and Julian, I am more open than I am with others. I feel myself at home with them, and confidence gives me a charm which otherwise I should not possess.

Friday, August 18th.—We did not find Bastien at home; I left him a message, and got a glimpse of what he has brought back from London. There is a little peddler leaning against a curb in the street; you can almost hear the rumble of the passing vehicles, and the background is barely indicated but the face! What a wonderful man!

Oh! what perverse idiots they are who regard him simply as a highly-skilled artisan!

He is a powerful and original artist; he is a poet; he is a philosopher; the others are but manufacturers of trash compared to him. You can look at nothing else when you see his painting, because it is as beautiful as nature, as beautiful as life. The other day Tony Robert-Fleury was obliged to agree with me that it required a great artist to copy nature, and even that no one but a great artist is capable of comprehending nature, and rendering its beauty. The ideal is in the *choice;* as to the *execution*, it should be the culmination of what the ignorant call naturalism. Paint, if you please, Enguerrand de Martigny, or Agnes Sorel; but let their hands, their hair, and their eyes be living, natural, and human. The subject matters little. The great masters have often painted subjects of their own epoch. Doubtless, from all points of view, the modern is that which is most interesting, but the true, the only, the valuable naturalism consists in execution. Let it be nature itself, and life; let the eyes speak! It matters little whether the subject be Mademoiselle de la Vallière or Sarah Bernhardt! Doubtless,

Digitized by Google

it is more difficult to interest you in old-time subjects, and yet, if Bastien-Lepage should paint Mademoiselle de la Vallière, or Marie Stuart, all dead and turned to dust and ashes as they are, they would live again. We also saw at Bastien's a sketch of the little portrait of the elder Coquelin, which is absolutely marvelous; the expression is his very own; his hands move, his eyes wink; he speaks.

Saturday, August 19th.—I work in the garden, where I have a good view of the grass and trees in the Parc Monceau. I am doing a street boy, twelve years old, in blouse and apron, seated on a bench, and reading an illustrated paper, with his empty basket beside him. One sees this continually at the park, and in the streets about here.

Monday, August 21st.—I should like to scratch out the eyes of everybody in the world! I am doing nothing! and time passes. For the last four days I have not posed. I began a study out of doors, but it rained, and the wind upset everything. I am doing nothing.

I tell you that I am becoming insane before this nothingness! They say that this torment proves my worth! Alas, no! It proves that I am intelligent, and see clearly.

Besides, I have been painting for three years.

Tuesday, August 22d.—I went to the Temple market with Rosalie; and my eyes are still opened wide. It is a marvelous quarter. I bought some old traps for the studio; but I did nothing but look at the various types of character. Oh, the street! But, that is to say, if one knew how to render that which one sees! Alas! I have the faculty to *see*, and I am still dazzled by all that I have seen—the attitudes, the gestures, life taken in the act of living, *true living*, nature. Oh, to take nature by surprise, and know how to reproduce it!

That is the great problem. Oh, why have I not! That brute of a Tony Robert-Fleury said truly, "With your aspirations, Mademoiselle, I should do everything in the world to make myself a master of the trade."

Digitized by Google

And so I came back and made several sketches of things I had seen—a bench in the street with several little girls talking and playing together—this collection of children's faces is exquisite; then a café table with two men whose characteristic attitudes are engraved on my memory and outlined on my canvas, the mistress of the café is lounging in the doorway; and then, at the Temple, a very blonde young girl, who laughs, leaning against her counter, a counter of mortuary wreaths—this last can be done in the studio.

But the two others require the open air. I do not know why I relate all this. To-morrow I shall begin to work with real, unremitting zeal.

The things we catch by chance are like open windows on the lives of people, and one divines the life, the character, and the occupation of these people. It is admirable; it has a definite, palpitating interest! But—

The imbeciles think that to be "modern," or a realist, it is sufficient to paint the first thing that comes to hand without arranging it. Do not arrange it but *choose*, and take it by surprise; everything is in that.

Wednesday, August 23d.—Instead of working well at some study, no matter what, I take walks; yes, Mademoiselle takes artists' walks and observes! I have gone twice to the orphan asylum, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

The matron is already my friend. As for the children, on my second visit—thanks to a present of bon-bons—they surrounded me, pressing around my dress like a *troupe* of delightful little animals. All those eyes were still confident, innocent, and vague, and they all followed me with short steps on their uncertain little legs. Then they were seated, and while playing, without any great pretense, the most advanced began to recite, glancing at me, from time to time, to see the effect.

As soon as I returned I made a sketch (*Sinite parvulos venire ad me*)—Jesus and the children. Ah! if I had talent!

Digitized by Google

Monday, August 28th.—There are days when I really believe myself to be somebody! Listen! it is impossible that this fever, this enthusiasm, this love of what I do, should not be destined to develop into something great. It is impossible to see and feel nature as I do, without arriving at some good result.

I have drawn the second figure of the picture; then, as Madame T—, who came in while I worked, read in a corner, I made a small sketch of her. Nothing should ever be arranged. No arrangement is equal to the truth of naturalness. High art consists in seizing the proper moment and painting what one sees.

But saturate yourself with this truth, that to *copy* nature *rightly* you must have genius, and that an ordinary artist can never do anything but parody it.

A skillful workman who copies for the sake of copying produces a vulgar work, which the vulgar crowd call realistic, and which it is often right to decry.

It is not a question of painting anything, no matter what, and painting it as you see it; after you have seized the feeling of what you are about to do, the pose is only maintained approximately; if you observe the pose too closely, you become stiff; the mind must keep the impression of the instant in which you *saw* the thing. It is in this that you recognize the artist.

I have reread a book by Ouida, a woman of no very great talent; it is called "Ariadne," and is in English.

It is a book that is calculated to excite in the highest degree; I have been on the point of rereading it twenty times in the last three or four years, and I have always recoiled, knowing what agitation it caused me the first time and would cause me again. It treats of art and love, and the scene is in Rome; three things united, of which one alone is enough to thrill me through and through, and love is the least of them. You might take love out of the book and enough would remain to

Digitized by Google

set me wild. I have an adoration, a veneration, and a passion for Rome that nothing equals. For the Rome of artists and poets, the *true*, has not been even tarnished for me by the worldly Rome which made me suffer. I recall only the poetic and artistic Rome, which I worship on my bended knees.

Sculpture is treated of in the book. I am always on the point of taking up sculpture; yesterday evening I could not sleep!

Oh, divine power of art! Oh, celestial and incomparable sentiment which swallows up everything for you! Oh, supreme joy which raises you above the earth! It is with a heart oppressed and eyes wet with tears, that I prostrate myself before God, that He may accord me His protection.

It is enough to drive me mad; I want to do ten things at once. I feel, I believe, I *believe*, you understand, that I am going to do something strong, and my soul flies toward unknown heights. Oh, that I may not have another and a worse fall! These reactions are terrible, but every experience is necessary in life. Days of depression follow hours of exaltation; we suffer during both. I am not enough of a poser, however, to say that we suffer equally.

To arrange nothing! And pictures? Mine! Well, it is nearly the same thing, a subject arrests your attention, strikes you. It is evident that, at the same instant you represent the scene to yourself, you see the picture.

If your imagination has been struck forcibly, you see it almost as quickly as you read or think.

I am sure that all truly striking pictures have been conceived thus.

Outside of this there is nothing but *technique*, what one has learned at the studio. Attempt only that which thrusts itself upon you, which torments you and absorbs you.

Dumas is right; you do not hold your subject, it is your subject that holds you. A man who stakes 5 francs at play feels the same emotion as a man who stakes 100,000. That is why comparative trifles affect me so deeply.

Digitized by Google

No, no! There is within me such a need of transcribing my impressions, such a violence of artistic emotions; so many confused things crowd into my head that some day I can not fail to gloriously realize my conceptions.

Tuesday, August 29th.—This book upsets me. Ouida is neither Balzac, nor George Sand, nor Dumas; but she has produced a book, which, for certain reasons—professional—puts me in a fever. She has very correct ideas on art, and opinions gathered in the studios in Italy, where she has lived.

There are some things which— She says, for example, that with true artists, not artisans, the conception is immeasurably superior to the power of execution. And then the great sculptor, *Marix* (in the novel), who sees the efforts in modeling of the young heroine, the future woman of genius, says: "Let her come and study. She will do everything she *wills*." "Yes," said Tony Robert-Fleury, after a long examination of my drawings at the studio, "work, Mademoiselle; *you can do what you will to do.*"

But I have worked, undoubtedly, in the wrong path. Saint-Marceaux has remarked it, my drawings are the drawings of a sculptor, and I have always loved form above everything.

I adore color also, but now, after this book, and even before, painting appears miserable to me beside sculpture. Besides, I ought to hate it as I hate all imitations, all impostures.

Nothing irritates me like seeing things in relief imitated in painting on a canvas necessarily flat and even. What is more horrible than pictures of bas reliefs, all the way from high art to paper prints? It enrages me as red enrages a bull. A frame imitated by painting in certain ceilings, even at the Louvre, and the borders in furnished flats which imitate carved wood or lace, are both odious!

But what holds me back? Nothing. I am free. My material surroundings are such that nothing is lacking to my artistic welfare. A whole story to myself—ante-room, toilet-room, chamber, library, studio, with a splendid light, looking out on

Digitized by Google

all sides at will; then a little garden, where I can work. I have had a speaking-tube put in, to prevent people from coming up to incommode me, and to avoid going down frequently.

What am I doing? A little girl who has put her black skirt over her shoulders and holds her umbrella open. I work out of doors, and it rains nearly every day. And then, what does it signify? What is it compared to a thought in marble? What do I make out of my sketch of three years ago (I drew it in October, 1879). This subject, "Ariadne," was given us at Julian's, and I was possessed with it as with the holy women at the sepulchre. Julian and Tony thought that the sentiment was good; as for me, I was taken with it as with the present picture. Here are three years that I have been on the point of turning sculptor, to execute this design. I feel no strength before these common-place things. And the terrible "what use is it," clips my wings.

Theseus has fled during the night. *Ariadne*, finding herself alone at dawn, ransacks the island; when at sunrise she reaches the extremity of a cliff she sees the vessel like a speck on the horizon. Then—that is the moment to seize, but difficult to describe; she can go no farther; she can not call; the water is there all around her; the vessel is a speck barely visible; then she falls on the rock, her head on her right arm, in a posture which ought to express all the horror of the abandonment, and of the despair of that woman, thus basely deserted. I do not know how to express it, but there are to be delineated her rage at her powerlessness, and a supreme dejection. You comprehend she is there, on the edge of the cliff, exhausted with grief and, I think, impotent rage; there is a cessation of action in the whole being, the end of everything. That steep rock, that brutal force that fetters the will!

Yes, too much attention to linear perspective is a mistake; too much attention to tones and color is a miserable thing, a matter of the trade which little by little absorbs everything, leaving no further scope for thought.

Digitized by Google

The technical skill of the thinkers and poets in painting is of the tenth-rate order. How could I misconstrue this truth up to this time, and clamp myself down when I possess such unbounded energy?

Thursday, August 30th.—I am drawing my "Magdalene," I have an admirable model for her; besides, I saw in my mind's eye the head I require, three years ago, and this woman has exactly those features, and even that intense, terrible, despairing expression.

What charms me in painting are the life, the modernness, and the movements of the things one sees. But how shall I express it? Outside of that it is desperately difficult, almost impossible —it is immovable.

Nothing in painting has touched me like "Joan of Arc" by Bastien-Lepage, for it contains something, I know not what, of the mysterious, the extraordinary. A sentiment comprehended by the artist—the perfect, intense expression of a great inspiration; in a word, he has sought to do something grand, human, inspired, and divine at the same time; *what she was*, in fact, and what no one had comprehended before him, and to dare to make another "Joan of Arc!" It is like "The Cross of My Mother!" in the old melodramas.

"Joan of Arcs" are as plentiful as "Ophelias" and "Marguerites!" He is thinking of painting an "Ophelia"; I am sure it will be divine. As for "Marguerites?" I, a weakling, have the project of painting one, for there is still room for a fine "Marguerite," as there was for a "Joan of Arc." It is when the young girl, not the "Marguerite" of the opera in a dress of fine cashmere, but the girl from the village or small town, simple—do not laugh—*human*—if you understand you will not laugh—when the young girl, until then *undisturbed*, goes into her garden after meeting *Faust*, and stops, with her eyes half lowered, looking into the distance, half astonished, half smiling, half pensive, and feels an indescribable something, new, unknown, charming, and sad, awake within her.

Digitized by Google

Her hands barely hold the prayer-book ready to fall. For this, I shall go to a little German city, and I shall paint the picture next summer.

But, good Lord, what have I done all this summer? Nothing! Besides, perhaps, my power of execution is not yet equal to my power of conception, and "Marguerite" can wait. But my picture, it is so beautiful, so sublime to produce! Would it not be better to wait a year more until I know more of the technicalities of my art? Ah! I am insane, I should learn grammar; I think only of writing poems. I ought to stay in the studio every day until 3 o'clock and then model for three or four hours. That is the truth. And why do I not do it? Why is this world what it is?

It is true that people less well-taught than I permit themselves to produce pictures, but it is those who have matured, and *can advance no farther.* I am not strong, but I can become so, and I have the consolation of being at the beginning; for I have worked only five years in all. And Robert-Fleury, the elder, remained four years at drawing before he touched a color; and how many are there who have remained two years on casts, and years at drawing? And I draw well and I begin to paint not badly; there is life in what I do; it speaks, it looks, it lives—then what? Nothing, work! Only I do not see my greatness in painting; that is to say, I am troubled, I no longer know—I am troubled; Oh, fool! I must first know my trade! The thought, the beauty, and the philosophy of painting are in the execution, in the exact comprehension of life. Seize life with tones that speak! and all *true* tones do speak. Anybody or anything *exactly* reproduced is a masterpiece, for it is life itself.

Sculpture you imagine, then, requires no execution? Well, hardly any. Sculpture is something higher, it is creation. Yes, the deceptions of lines and color are miserable things to worry over; you execute, you are skillful in sculpture, but in a different way; you create.

Digitized by Google

There is material work in both; but in sculpture it is simpler, nobler, more honest, if I may be allowed the expression. Finally, you can put into it that spark, that supreme mystery of something that is in you, which is divine, and which I can not describe.

Friday, September 1st.—I received a letter from mamma, who writes me that the young neighbors have arrived for a two months' visit with friends, and that they are going to organize great hunts. She is ready to return but, as I had told her to give me notice if— She gives me notice. Well, she plunges me into an ocean of uncertainty, doubts, and troubles. If I go, I shall have no picture in the *Salon*. If indeed I had worked all summer, I should have the need of rest for an excuse; but no— Finally, acknowledge that it would be magnificent; yes, but nothing is less probable. I should spend four days and four nights in railroad travel, and sacrifice the efforts of a year to go and endeavor to please some one I have never seen and make him marry me. Reason and reflection see nothing in this. From the moment I discuss this insanity, I am liable to commit it, for I no longer know what I do. I will go to a woman who tells fortunes by cards, to Mother Jacob, who foretold that I should be very ill.

For 20 francs I have bought myself happiness for two days at least. Mother Jacob predicts delightful things for me, a little mixed—but she repeated continually to me that I am going to have an immense, brilliant success; the papers will speak of the great talent which I shall have—and then, a great, happy change, a very fortunate marriage, a great deal of money, and travels—grand travels.

You can say that I am living in a fool's paradise if you will, but it has cost me but 20 francs. I shall not go to Russia, but to Algeria—for if this is to happen, it will happen in Algeria as well as in Russia.

Digitized by Google

Good-night; this has done me good, I shall work well to-morrow.

Wednesday, September 5th.—It rains every day. It is exasperating to me who wish to work out of doors. I have finished a little girl with an umbrella; it is bad, and the little girl had an odious face—one of those little street children of mine, pretty and cross-grained as possible.

Then I went to the asylum, and I dare not undertake two little boys together; I should be forced to make a bad ending of it, a week must be allowed for each head. And if I painted the men at the café? I do not know; things strike me, and then come into play my ill-balanced nature and cross-grained mind. In a word, I am a fool, and I know it!

The elder Dumas says that when one hesitates between two things, it is because neither of them is good. And he adds, that he never has hesitated more than five minutes in his life. He is very lucky, or else a good liar.

Thursday, September 6th.—I am not an artist; I have wished to be, and as I am intelligent, I have learned certain things. Then how explain what Robert-Fleury said when I began: "You have everything that is not learned." He was mistaken.

But I dabble in art as I do in everything else—with intelligence and skill, that is all. Then why did I draw heads with chalk on the card tables in the country, when I was four years old?

All children draw. But why did I have a continual desire to draw sketches from engravings while I was still in Russia; and afterward at Nice, at the age of eleven? There my teachers discovered extraordinary aptitude in me; this lasted two years. Then, always in search of genuine instruction, I had two or three other teachers who each gave me two or three lessons, that is to say, with whom I worked two or three hours.

In short, after thinking it over carefully, I find that I always had a desire to learn, to make experiments with none

Digitized by Google

to direct them; and then the trip into Italy, Rome. In romances it is described how one has the eyes suddenly opened to take in beauty; but I confess that my eyes opened little by little to see the beauties, that is to say, the qualities of paintings. At last I have lost confidence. I have lost courage, something is lacking in me. I see the beauty of color; but—I can not even say definitely that I do not attain it, for I have done one or two things, the coloring and execution of which are good, and what I have done once, I can do again; that is what encourages me. I think I shall bid farewell to my life as artist and painter—especially as painter. I can paint not badly, but I think I should do sculpture better. I feel things that can not be delineated in color—forms, movements, expressions.

Tuesday, September 14th.—I carried my canvases to Julian and he is very well satisfied. I must finish "The Angler," which may have a little success—yes, finish it, nothing but that. He is not exacting, is Father Julian! Then he said that the "Père Jacques" of Bastien was admirably painted; but that there is no particular meaning to it, while this angler is real. It is a type, you see a great many like that; it is the placid man who can sit for hours without a bite; the head stands out from the water. If it were well finished! But there are already good points to it, it only needs— And then I showed the little girl with the umbrella, and then I aired all my ideas on art, of which there are scraps in my journal; he says that I have changed, that I am literary and "artistic;" but that need not matter, of course, so long as it helps me to make progress. The thought of my picture makes me rave!

Monday, September 18th.—As my poor model was sick I returned about 5 o'clock, and found Robert-Fleury painting his background. We talked again about painting in the open air. (If you knew what constant suffering is caused by these continual efforts to hear! I flee from everything that I once sought. I fear to meet people—it is atrocious!) But at last

Digitized by Google

I believe that the artist who has the honor of directing my artistic conscience will be converted by me and will paint a picture in the open air. Besides, he says that he has no objection to the open air, and that fundamentally we agree. That is quite possible.

I have been reading Balzac! And, talking of this, I coincide with his *de Marsay*, when I speak of this second *ego* that remains always the passionless spectator of the first. And to think that he, Balzac, is dead! One can find the happiness of loving, only in loving a man of universal genius. In Balzac one finds everything—I am very proud to have had several times the same thoughts that he had.

Friday, September 22d.—Yesterday I carried "The Angler" to Robert-Fleury. It is not bad, but that is all; he finds that the composition is very good, that the expression of the face is very good, and that it is well spread on the canvas; but the painting is thin, the outlines are hard, and the good man is not *bathed in air;* these reflections are from both Robert-Fleury and from me; I knew all this before. Then I talked of my progress, of my work, and involuntarily made the mistake of speaking of my discouragement, and the little confidence I have in myself. I sat for my portrait to-day, and Robert-Fleury told me that he had talked about me with Julian, about my experiments and my ambitions. Both he and Julian felt sorry for me, and they agreed that I would do well to make simple studies in the studio; that the difficulties of open-air work are beyond my present strength, and that this fact discourages me. He told me this with such delicacy and feeling that I had great difficulty in restraining my tears. I believe he thought that I was unnerved at not having made a success of the old man, which Julian had permitted me to hope I would do, and wished to protect me from what he deemed despair. He has always told me that nobody advances more quickly, that I am getting along very well, and he laughed a great deal at my desire to go faster than nature. Yesterday,

Digitized by Google

again he said that I am admirably gifted, that I have only to keep on, and behold I have spoiled all by my mad wailings of yesterday and my appearance of consternation to-day; I shall never again have faith in any word of encouragement I may receive. I have allowed my unhappiness to be too clearly seen, not to believe that such words must have their origin in pity.

As for my picture, I did not dare even to speak of it; it was as if the air became lead and pulled the skin of my face toward the ground, and my arms burned.

Since I have complained, since I was foolish enough to disclose the greatness of my ambition, these two men can only give me reasonable advice, seeing that it is neither a play nor a pastime with me, and that it has plunged me in despair. Then, like two honest doctors, they order me energetic remedies. From all this, it appears that I am not in condition to paint a figure; a picture for a studio study will always pass, while— It will not do to show my feeling, as if I had founded insane hopes on the old man. I should hear the truth no longer. And Breslau? Breslau has two years and a half the start of me. What does that prove? Nothing; for two years ago she was stronger than I am to-day. She has painted six years and a half, and I just four years. I do not include drawing, neither for her nor for me. So, if in 1884 I have not done what she is doing, I am inferior to her.

I do not need to hear that to know it. And here is a year that I have suffered martyrdom. I assure you my sufferings have been cruel. I have lost my own self-respect, courage, confidence, and hope.

To work, but with the horrible conviction that it will lead to no results; that is the thought that paralyzes me! And nothing can restore me except a good picture, and that is impossible in this moral disaster that has overtaken me.

There is but one thing to consider—that I have not been able to paint my old man very well; that I have had the

Digitized by Google

good luck to put my hand on an original, interesting, artistic subject, and that I have been able to do nothing with it. Behold the prodigy I am!

I am without strength; everything is finished; there is an annihilation of my whole being—and not even rhetoric left to express that consternation which deprives me of strength to hold the pen in my hand. Now for excuses: It rained, and I have always been interrupted in the midst of the execution of a detail; this is true. I need not have shown that canvas which I did not consider yet presentable; but not being able to work, I wished for advice.

Then, seeing what a poor thing it was, Tony said that the open air was too difficult for me. And to-morrow I return to *Grande-Jatte*, and, with the rage and energy of despair, I am going to begin all over again.

Sunday, September 24th.—The days follow each other, and are all alike; painting from 8 o'clock until 5; a good hour for a bath before dinner; then a silent dinner. I read the papers; an occasional word with my aunt. She must have a dull time of it, poor woman! And, truly, I am not agreeable. She has had nothing in life, for they always sacrificed her for mamma, who was handsome, and now she lives but for us, for me, and it is not in me to be gay and agreeable during the few moments that we are together; and then I am happy in the silence, during which I do not think of my infirmities.

In Russia, Saturday, October 14th.—My aunt left me at the frontier, and I am traveling with Paul. I make sketches at the stations and on the road, and I read "*Tra los Montes.*" In this manner I revisit Spain, for Gautier's journey is a series of colored photographs. What is it, then, that prevents me from altogether liking Théophile Gautier? What is there, then, in this book of travels that jars upon me? When he relates some droll episode, you do not laugh and he says: *It was the most comical thing in the world*, or *the funniest thing in the world*, or

Digitized by Google

it was so comical, etc. This produces the effect of a gentleman, who, before telling a story, says that, when he first heard it he laughed over it until he cried. But there is something else. It is not sincere, perhaps, as literature, or, rather, it seems somewhat forced. It is the general opinion that he is especially to be admired when he touches upon art. He does not speak of art very much in these travels, and he noticeably omits Velasquez. I can not understand that in a man so in love with painting.

He talks of Goya. Doubtless, Goya was a great artist, even though I am not familiar with his paintings. It appears that his drawings and etchings are admirable. He talks then of Goya, but why not of Velasquez? He speaks of Murillo, and the magic of his painting; but Velasquez is the greatest painter that ever lived; no one has ever equaled him in truth to nature. His figures are flesh and blood, and from the *painting* point of view, they are the culmination of art.

We have to wait here five hours for the train. The town is called Znamenka, and I am talking in such a place of Gautier, of Velasquez, etc.! It is cold and cloudy. If it were not so cold, what a day for open-air work! I looked at the peasants, with their garments weather-stained, as they are in all countries, and no sunshine. Well, I assure you that the paintings of Bastien are phenomenally correct. "They are gray; they seem flat; they have no consistency," say those who have not looked carefully on nature out of doors, and those used to the exaggerations of the studio; but they are, for that very reason, altogether correct and wonderfully true. He is a fortunate man, that Bastien! I had to go away full of the humiliation of my abortive angler.

I shall endeavor to paint the same subject in March for the *Salon.*

Robert-Fleury even advised me to do so. I must leave the background and the clothes as they are, and work only on the head.

Digitized by Google

Gavronzi, Sunday, October 15th.—We went to bed at 7 o'clock this morning, for we started directly from the station at Poltava for Gavronzi. Mamma, papa, Dina, and Kapitan were at the station. Paul's wife has a boy two weeks old. The girl is a year old, and is charming, with long, black eyelashes. The young P—s are to come to-morrow. Michka went to visit them, instead of welcoming me with the others.

Thursday, October 19th.—We have them at last. They came with Michka in time for breakfast. Victor, the elder, is slender and dark, with a large and rather thick aquiline nose, and somewhat thick lips; but he is distinguished looking and sympathetic. The younger, Basil, is as tall, and much larger, very blonde, with a ruddy complexion, and furtive eyes. He has the appearance of a fighter, a stirrer about in the open air, brutal, and—well, yes—vulgar. I kept on my yesterday's gown—a white woolen dress, short and very simple, and I wore child's shoes of russet goat-skin. My hair was twisted, and fastened tolerably low on the neck. It was not one of my brilliant days; neither was I much at a disadvantage.

As the weather was very fine, we took a walk to the mountain whence the view is magnificent; it resembles the environs of Toledo. The young men talked like men of the world and Russian soldiers. They are very young. The elder is not twenty-three, I think. I am very tired from having to smile and talk all day, for papa forced them to stay to dinner, although they assured him they had an important engagement with their superintendent, who was to take them over their domains, etc. This countrified habit of forcing people to stay is stupid; it bored me a little.

Here is an incident that took place. Their coachman got drunk (this it seems he does habitually here); then, without any ado, Prince Basil went out and overwhelmed the poor man with blows from his fists and kicks from his spurred boots. Does not that make your back creep? This boy is horrible, and his brother gains by the contrast.

Digitized by Google

I do not think I am making a conquest of either of them. I have nothing that could please them; I am of medium stature, well proportioned, and moderately fair; I have gray eyes, my bust is not too full, and my waist is by no means wasp-like; mentally, I think, without too much vanity, that I am sufficiently superior to them for them to appreciate the fact.

As a woman of the world I am not more charming than a great many others in the circles which they frequent.

Sarah Bernhardt was hissed on her arrival in the station of St. Petersburg, because they expected to see her large and dark, with enormous black eyes and a mass of frizzly black hair. Aside from that stupidity, the judgment passed on the talent of the woman was very sound, and I am entirely of the opinion of the Russian journals, which place Mademoiselle Delaporte above Sarah; and beyond that, how about Desclée? I do not get much satisfaction from Sarah, except the adorable music of her voice when she recites poetry. But why have I been talking to you about Sarah?

Friday, October 20th.—Monday, October 23d.—There was general consternation Saturday morning. The princes excused themselves! Called away to a neighboring estate by a dispatch, they would not come to hunt—and I had had so much trouble to dress myself! for I must tell you that I had such a heartburn from drinking bad milk, that it was only by the greatest effort that I succeeded in putting on that black velvet dress, in which it is impossible to be ugly. Papa turned green and mamma turned red.

As for me I laughed heartily. Finally, we started out in spite, in terribly bad humor and swearing not to go any farther than Michel's, who had a magnificent breakfast in waiting, while the horses regained their wind.

Then, with minds somewhat calmed, we kept on our way, quarreling every ten minutes about going back. We stopped in the middle of the fields. Papa, Paul, and Michka got down

Digitized by Google

and the discussion was carried on through the door. Mamma's indisposition was given as an excuse to Michka.

Finally, after papa had told our coachman to listen to us no longer, we started again, half laughing and half grieving. It is evident that nobody could guess our mad projects. People might well imagine that we would be delighted if it had happened; but nobody could imagine that I came as I did, only we who knew the true state of affairs feared like thieves lest it should be read on our faces.

Uncle Alexander expected us with the princes. He did not dare to say that he would have curtailed the expense if he had foreseen that he was to have only us and Michka, who also must have felt a little disappointment. You can have no idea of the enormous importance of those two little idiots in this region. Uncle Alexander had brought three cooks from Kharkoff, and among them the famous Prosper from the club.

Otherwise, the hunt was magnificent; fifteen wolves and a fox were killed. The weather was fine. We lunched in the middle of the forest with over 400 peasants looking on, after having chased the beasts toward our guns. "Our guns" is slightly an exaggeration, for I did not fire a shot, nor, indeed, run across a thing to shoot at; nothing. The wolves went to the left and I was at the right, as well as papa, Michka, and Garnitsky. I saw a fox, but not within range. Then liquor was given the peasants. Ah! I forgot my triumphant shot!

A peasant climbed to the top of a tree; someone threw him a bottle of brandy which he stuck on the highest branch, first having taken care to empty it, and we amused ourselves by firing at it; every one broke off a bit of it, even myself. Uncle Alexander took pains to play the agreeable and overwhelmed me with flatteries, as did Nadine, also. Their son Stephen is a charming boy, fourteen years old, and ranks first in the military gymnasium.

Digitized by Google

As for the viands and the wines, one could ask no better, and then this country is ravishing. The house is delightfully planned, and not until now have I been able to understand what a very artistic, intelligent, and superior being was grandpapa (Babanine), although immured in his village. I would not change one thing about the garden, the park, the ponds, or the paths. What praise! The autumn, and the neglect of everything for ten years, enhance its charm. Gavronzi is very ugly compared to Tchermiakowka.

The rooms here are so well arranged, so home-like, you feel so comfortable! The peasant women are beautiful, the people are so picturesque! You remember last year what trouble I had to find something to do at Gavronzi. It is, perhaps, because I spent my youth here—no, it is because it is simply adorable. For those who have memories it may be another thing.

And the billiard table, a little billiard table that has been there since—well, mamma remembers it since her childhood, and I remember it when I did not come up to the top of it. I played on the piano in the great, white, empty parlor, and I thought of grandmamma who used to listen of old, in the depths of her chamber, at the end of the long, long corridor.

If she had lived, she would be only sixty-five now. We dined in the middle of that apartment where her body was laid out for three days. I do not know if the others thought of it, but it gave me the shivers. People forget everything. Had she lived, she would have been so proud of me, and so happy!

Ah, if one could make the dead live again, with what attentions they would be surrounded! Grandmamma had nothing but suffering.

This evening was a revival of one of those happy gatherings under mamma's reign. All the candles were lighted, all the doors of the seven large apartments were thrown open,

Digitized by Google

and they seemed well filled, although there were but sixteen of us.

Uncle Etienne played the piano pretty well; then a waltz, and Michka, flinging a *starovoi* over his shoulder, waltzed three times around the room.

The *policemen* who had superintended the hunt were asked to dinner.

We had fireworks, and to make the entertainment complete, a fusee set fire to a minute hen-roost thatched with stubble. This procured everybody the semblance of an emotion very cheaply. The men and women servants ran like hares, the water-buckets clashed, people screamed; the hosts and the guests rushed about, it was a night hunt; with the flames and the trees, it was delightful! We rushed into the dark corners in white gowns and satin slippers; at any other time I should have been in the midst of the fire like Michka and papa, and Paul, and the overseers. Papa really was in the flames; he saved all the chickens, and, perhaps, did run some little danger. It was so entertaining, there was nothing to fear. As for the unfortunate Jew, the author of the fireworks and of the disaster, he fled as fast as his legs could carry him, and spent the night at Paul's house, about a half-hour's distance from the hen-roost. Papa gave him 3 roubles for his journey the day following, but he preferred to make the trip hanging on to the back of the landau; for forty *versts* he was balanced precariously on a bit of wood. We did not discover this traveler until we had gone half way.

Friday, October 27th.—It was raw and cloudy after yesterday's beautiful sunshine, and, tired of idleness, I proposed to go to Poltava with mamma and Paul. On the way we met the princess and Dina returning, and Dina went back with us. At the hotel we found Michka and Lihopay, and went to the theatre. The play confirmed my opinion of the Russian stage. The stage and fiction are always more or less a reflection of

Digitized by Google

real life; well, I do not congratulate my country. It possesses a coarseness at once *naïve* and depraved.

People kiss each other on the lips as if it were nothing, and this takes place between lovers, or husband and wife and then they kiss each other on the neck, cheeks, etc., and the audience takes no notice of it. And there are situations that should be hissed. Young ladies of the upper classes, the sympathetic *ingénues* of the play, slap young gentlemen that make love to them, and whom they suspect of loving only their dowry. To sum up—if all this happened in the world of *cocottes*, or in the kingdom of phantasy, or in the antiquity of Offenbach, and accompanied with all the usual follies and jests, it might pass; but this takes place among people of every-day life who are supposed to be refined, people like you and me, and it is all done seriously.

One does not know what to think of it.

This evening, the heroine of the play was a little barbarian, an *ingénue*, who is madly in love with a married man, middle-aged, depraved, and witty (in the play); every time that they are alone, and this happens constantly in the course of the piece, there is osculation *ad libitum*, innocent on the part of the *ingénue*, but with him, quite a different thing; then, one evening, there comes a time when the gentleman draws back, and the *ingénue* says to him, "Why do you avoid me? What are you thinking of? I am a living being, after all; there is blood in my veins," etc. Finally, she yields to the advances of a young man who is in love with her, and returns to say to the elderly man and his wife (for he has a young and pretty wife) that he, the faithless husband, is to blame for it all, for he had excited her senses to such a point that she had been forced into the step she had taken. The young man marries her and, calling her "my betrothed," imprints such a furious kiss upon her mouth, that I am sure her lips must have been black and blue the next day. This is coarse, but it is not *immoral;* it disgusts you with love, and it arouses absolutely no other feeling whatever.

Digitized by Google

Monday, November 6th.—Doubtless these people can not understand Paris, elegance, celebrity? What is the use of it all, they ask? Actors are celebrated, painters are known but by name; and in that respect, after all, Raphael alone is known and cited; and then there are the chromos of the Russian daubers, whose talent is false, pretentious, and empty like their character. As to elegance, they only believe in that of the dressmakers of Kharkoff, "who have the Paris fashions," and our own dresses are "outlandish," "exaggerated," and really, coming from Paris, we are not well dressed.

How then do you think that these people can understand what I suffer from staying here with my arms folded!

Wednesday, November 8th.—Here people go to the ball, get tipsy with friends, play cards and sup with the *danseuses;* and if they talk to the ladies it is because they are in love with them.

But to talk to everybody, and about everything, as in France, that is unknown in these parts. No news penetrates here, and there is no conversation but the vulgarest and flattest gossip. The hotel is the great distraction; the noble land-owners of the vicinity come and sometimes spend whole weeks there, exchange visits from room to room, drink and play cards. The theatre is deserted, and they have a horror of anything that has the shadow of resemblance to an intelligent pastime.

People grovel extraordinarily before the aristocracy in this noble country—ah! I want to go away! What if I should become that way? But to return to our princes whom I insist, to the great astonishment of the Poltavians, on treating as I treat all people in society, as equals, and according to the usages of the civilized world—our princes do not please me much. Nevertheless, the younger (the one who beat the coachman), is gay, amiable, and not stupid; I do not say this because he played at wit by crawling under a table set with fruits and champagne to upset it. It is true that he beat the

Digitized by Google

coachman. Yes, but this can be explained to a great extent in this country and in this age. Do you think that people are astonished or shocked here? In another it would be perfectly natural, in Prince R— it is charming. I wish to leave!

Paris, Wednesday, November 15th.—I am in Paris! We started Thursday evening. Uncle Nicolas and Michka accompanied us to the first station, and Paul and his wife as far as Kharkoff. We stayed twenty-four hours at Kiew, where Julie (Uncle Alexander's daughter) is at the Institute. She is fourteen years old, and is charming.

Thursday, November 16th.—I have been to a great doctor, a surgeon in the hospital; I did not give my name and I was very simply dressed, for I wanted him to tell me the truth.

Oh, he is not an amiable gentleman. He told me this very plainly: I SHALL NEVER BE CURED. But my condition can improve in a satisfactory manner, so that my deafness will not be terrible to bear. Bah! it is already unbearable, and it will be more so as time goes on. If I do not follow rigorously the treatment which he prescribes, it will increase. He also directed me to a doctor who will look after me for six months, for he himself has not the time to see me twice a week, as is necessary.

For the first time I had the courage to say: "Monsieur, I am becoming deaf." Hitherto, I have said: "I do not hear well, my ears are stuffed up," etc.

This time I dared to say that horrible word, and the doctor replied to me with the brutality of a surgeon.

I hope that the misfortunes presaged by my dreams are *this*. But let us not borrow trouble about the bolts that God holds in reserve for His humble servant. At present I am only partially deaf.

The surgeon said that it will certainly improve. As long as I have a family who keep guard around me and come to my aid with address and affection, it is still endurable; but alone, in the midst of strangers!

Digitized by Google

And if I should have a husband who would be ill-tempered or have little delicacy of feeling? On the other hand it might be redeemed by some great good fortune by which I would be overpowered without meriting it! But— Why, then, do they say that God is good, that God is just?

Why does God cause suffering? If it were He Who created the world, why did He create evil, suffering, wickedness?

Then I never shall be cured. It may be possible to bear the misfortune, but there will be a veil between me and the rest of the world. The voice of the wind in the branches, the murmur of water, the rain which beats against the panes, words spoken in a low tone—I shall hear nothing of all this! With the K—'s I have not found myself at fault once, nor when I have been at a dinner party; when the conversation is a little animated, I have nothing to complain of; but, at the theatre, I can not hear all that the actors say, and with the models at the studio, people speak very low in order not to disturb the others. Of course I have anticipated this more or less for over a year; ought I to have grown accustomed to the idea? I *have* grown accustomed to it; but all the same, it is simply frightful.

The blow has struck me in a most vital part.

Oh, if it only stops where it is!

Friday, November 17th.—So, then, I shall be henceforth less than the most worthless of human beings—incomplete, infirm.

I shall need the sympathy and aid of my own family and the consideration of strangers. Independence and liberty are ended for me.

I, who have been so proud, must blush and hesitate every moment.

I write this to impress the fact upon my mind; but I do not yet believe it, it is so horrible. I can not yet realize it; it is so hard, so cruel!

The sight of my fresh, rosy face in the mirror fills me with pity.

Digitized by Google

Yes, everybody knows it, or will know it—all those who were already so glad to decry me. She is deaf—but my God, why have You suddenly inflicted upon me this shocking, frightful, atrocious thing!

Tuesday, November 21st.—I began again yesterday to work at the studio. I have returned to the simplest studies, taking no note of the choice of the model, its beauty, nor anything else. "Six months of this system," says Julian, "and you can do whatever you want." He is convinced that I have accomplished nothing in the last three years, and I shall end by believing him; in fact, since I have begun painting, I have made but little progress. Is that because I work less hard? No! I have worked myself to death, and for the last two years I have undertaken too difficult things, perhaps.

But Julian insists upon it, that it is because I do not work that I do not do better.

They all weary me. I weary myself. I shall never recover my hearing. Do you not feel how horrible, how unjust, how maddening this is?

I bear the thought calmly, because I have prepared myself for it. But no, it is not on that account; it is because I can not believe that it will be forever.

You understand what it means—all my life, until I die!

It will have an influence on my character and on my mind, without counting that, because of it, my hair is already turning gray.

I repeat it, I can not yet believe it. It is impossible that there is nothing, nothing to be done; that this is to be forever so, and that I shall die with this veil between the world and myself, and that I shall never, never, never hear again!

Is it not true that it is impossible to believe in a sentence so final, so irrevocable? And not the shadow of a hope, not the shadow, not the shadow!

It makes me nervous while I work. I am always thinking that the model, or someone in the studio, is saying that I do

Digitized by Google

not hear; or that they are ridiculing me; or that they are raising their voices for my sake.

And with the model at home? Can I not say squarely that —that what? That I do not hear well. What! Such an avowal of infirmity! and an infirmity so humiliating, so stupid, so pitiable; in short, an *infirmity!*

I have not the courage to confess it, and I have always the hope that no one will perceive it.

Do you know I am simply writing words here? I do not believe them. How can I realize this horrible nightmare—this shocking, cruel, atrocious thing? I, so full of youth and life? How can I believe that it is possible, that it is not a bad dream, that it is eternal?

Thursday, November 23d.—What I have done this week is so bad that I can not understand it myself. Julian called me to him, and spoke such useless, such cruel words. I do not understand it! Last year he told me almost the same thing, and now, when he sees last year's studies, he says: "You could not do as well as that now; that was good work." To believe him, then, I have made no progress during the last three years; that is to say, he began his reproaches, lamentations, and little sarcastic speeches three years ago, when I first commenced to paint.

He thinks, perhaps, that it will incite me to work, but it has quite the contrary effect; it paralyzes me. I was good for nothing this morning for more than three hours; my hands trembled, and my arms burned.

Last summer I painted Irma laughing, and everybody thought it very good. This summer, after my return from Spain, I made a pastel, which everyone thought exceedingly good, and a painting, which was considered good. What have I done since? I spoiled my angler. Yes, and then I went to Russia—six weeks' vacation. I returned, and chanced upon a model I did not like, and a bad position. I forced myself to work, all the same, although against my will. I

Digitized by Google

produced a wretched thing, which I tore to pieces and trampled upon; then I tried to paint an arm. Julian came up and found it very bad, and told me so privately. I know that I am not a Breslau; I know that I need to study; but between that and telling me that my case is hopeless, that I do nothing well—upon my word, one would say that I knew nothing at all.

It is not my fault. After my illness at Nice, he characterized all my efforts as horrors. In that I agree with him, but it was not right to tell me that it was because of my idleness that I made no progress; that I was sure of myself, that I did not care, that I believed I knew it all. He can not really think that, but it is stupid of him to tell me so, for it paralyzes me.

If I do not make such rapid progress in painting as I did in drawing, that is no reason to say such outrageous things to me.

Monday, November 27th.—A pupil is posing for me, and very gladly, for I will give her the picture. Crushed by Julian, I scarcely dared to ask anyone to do it, believing that such a request would be ridiculous from one who has no talent, who does nothing good, etc.

Now that he can no longer say that I am idle, because I am working in his studio, he says that I am pretending. This is becoming monotonous. The day before yesterday he told me that, for two years, I had made no progress. Of those two years I was ill five months and convalescing six more. In the rest of the time I painted my *Salon* picture, a woman, life-size, painted in Russia; the "Old Nicene," "Thérèse," "Irma" and "Dina." Those were the large pictures; I do not count the numerous small ones. This may be bad, I know, but I do not think so myself.

I suppose he thinks that what he says will stimulate me, and that it is witty. It is exasperating! Of course I am not so favorably situated as Breslau, who lives in a little artistic circle, where each word, each step, has something to do with art; but

Digitized by Google

I assure you, I do what I can, considering my surroundings. I am forced, undoubtedly, to waste my time. In the evening, for instance, which Breslau employs in sketching and composing, my attention is distracted by the people around me.

One's surroundings count for fully one half, when one is a student. All this fills me with a cold rage, and takes away something of my attachment to my family. If I did not fear to draw down upon myself other troubles, I would say that God was not just. Yet, why? No; I hate myself. I have grown fat, and my shoulders were broad enough already. My arms are rounder, and my chest is fuller than before.

Sunday, December 3d.—Oh, God! give me the strength to pursue my studies, that I may become mistress of my profession; then I can do what I like. I reason so well, and I have no strength. When one is thoroughly conversant with one's profession, everything that one does is good, or almost so, while with me now— What are six months? Can I not wait patiently for six months? Can I not forget that it would amuse me to paint, and make only studies and lose no time?

Let me only persevere, and then we shall see.

Tuesday, December 5th.—I have just read "Honorine" at a sitting, and I would like to possess such sublime eloquence of the pen so as to make my readers interested in my dull life. It would be strange if this story of my failures, and my obscurity, should give me what I want, and what I shall always want. But I should not know it; and besides, in order that one should read my journal, with its interminable pages, would it not be necessary for me to become famous first?

The uncertainty and discouragement make me idle, that is to say, I read all the evening, and then I suffer terrible remorse. But still I am idle, whether alone or with my family, and it is demoralizing. I write, stopping at each word, for I can not depict the terrible trouble, prostration, and terror which seize me at the thought that I can not devote my attention to anything.

Digitized by Google

What has happened? Nothing.

I would joyfully consent to live only ten years longer, if I could have genius at once, and so realize my dreams.

Two or three days ago, we went to the Hôtel Drouot, where there was an exhibition of precious stones. Mamma, my aunt, and Dina admired many of the ornaments; but I did not care much for any of them except a string of enormous diamonds, which, for a moment, I longed to own; to have two would be delightful; but there was no use in longing for a miracle, so I contented myself with thinking that perhaps some day, when I married a millionaire, I could have ear-rings of like size, or an agraffe, for stones of that weight would be almost too heavy for ear-rings. That was the first time I had ever cared anything for precious stones. Well, yesterday evening, those two diamonds were brought to me; my mother and my aunt had bought them for me, and yet I had only said, without the least hope of having them, "Those are the only jewels I would care to have." They are worth 25,000 francs; the stones are yellow, otherwise, they would have cost triple that amount.

I amused myself with them all evening, and kept them in my pocket while I was modeling. Dusautoy played, and Bojidar and the others talked. I kept the stones with me all evening, and finally took them to bed with me.

Ah! if other things which appear impossible would also come to pass! even if they should be yellow, and cost only 4,000 instead of 25,000!

But this discontent is absurd; I have no complaint to make of anyone.

Thursday, December 7th.—I talked a little while to-day with Julian, but we no longer have those long talks we used to have; we have nothing more to talk about; all has been said. We are waiting until I work and accomplish something. However, I reproached him with his injustice toward me, or rather with the means he has taken to spur me on.

Digitized by Google

My pastel will go to a club, and then to the *Salon*. "It is an admirable thing," said Father Julian; and I felt like throwing my arms around his neck.

"Well, you must paint a picture that will arrest the attention of artists."

But, I can not do that just yet. Ah, heaven! if I could believe that by working I could accomplish it; it would give me courage. But it seems to me now that I shall never be able to do it.

I work badly; yes, I know I do. Since I painted "Irma," I have dawdled about with "Père Charles," and then I have been to Russia; total, three months of demoralization. And three months represent a dozen studies, a dozen torsos, life-size, or a dozen groups, half-size. I have never in my life made four in succession. Julian is right, and I ought to have embraced him.

But—but I was ill a year.

Thursday, December 14th.—This morning we went to see the pictures which the real Bastien has brought back with him from the country. We found him altering some of the details of the pictures. We met like old friends. He is so simple, so amiable. Perhaps he is not all that; but he has so much genius. And yet—yes, he is charming.

And the poor architect is entirely effaced by his brother's brilliancy. Jules brought back many studies: "Evening in the Village" was full of color, poetry, and charm. The moon is just rising and the windows of the houses are lighted; a man, returning from his labor in the fields, has stopped to speak to a woman, who is going toward a house, the windows of which are lighted; the effect of twilight is marvelously rendered, and you can feel the calm pervading everything; everything is still, but only you almost fancy you can hear the distant baying of a dog. It is in the style of Jules Breton, but better than anything that poetical pigmy ever did.

There is also a forge, at which an old man is at work. It is quite small, and it is no less beautiful than those marvelous

Digitized by Google

little dark pictures one sees at the Louvre. There are also landscapes and marine views of Venice and London; and two large pictures, an English flower-girl, and a little girl in a field. The latter are life-size and they filled me with astonishment, for they seemed to me so inferior to anything else he has done.

At first, one is dazzled by the versatility and power of his genius, which disdains to limit itself to a specialty, but does everything in a masterly manner.

His English boy is far above the two girls I have just mentioned; while his street boy of last year, called "*Pas-Mèche*" was simply a masterpiece.

Sunday, December 17th.—The true, the only, the unique, the great Bastien-Lepage came to-day.

I received him in an awkward and confused manner, nervous and humiliated at having nothing to show him.

He remained more than two hours, and looked at all the pictures in all the corners, although I, laughing nervously, tried to prevent him from seeing them. The great artist was very kind; he tried to calm me, and we spoke of Julian, who is the cause of my great discouragement. Bastien does not treat me like a society girl, he speaks to me as Tony Robert-Fleury and Julian do, only without those horrible pleasantries of Julian, who says that it is all over; that I shall never do anything; that there is no hope for me.

That is what makes me feel so badly.

Bastien is adorable; that is to say, I adore his talent. And I think my very nervousness was a delicate and unexpected flattery to him. He made a sketch in Miss Richards' album, which she had given to me to draw something in, and as the paint passed through and stained the next leaf, he wished to put a piece of paper between.

"No, leave it, leave it," I exclaimed, "she will then have two sketches." I don't know why I should do a favor to Miss Richards, but it sometimes amuses me to give a great

Digitized by Google

pleasure to someone who does not expect it and who is nothing to me.

When I was painting at *Grande-Jatte*, there came one day to the water's edge a whole family, the father and four or five children, ragged, dirty, and the perfect picture of misery. I gave them 2 francs. You should have seen the poor wretches' surprise and delight. I ran away and hid myself behind the trees. Heaven has never treated me so well! Heaven has never shown these benevolent fancies to me.

Wednesday, December 20th.—I have nothing started for the *Salon* yet, and I can not think of any subject. It is torture!

Saturday, December 23d.—This evening we had to dinner the great, the true, the only, the incomparable Bastien-Lepage and his brother.

We had invited no other guests, which made it a little embarrassing. They dined with us for the first time, and it seemed, perhaps, a little too familiar, and then there was the fear that he might be bored.

His brother, of course, is received here almost as intimately as Bojidar, but the great, the only, the true, etc. However, the good little man, who, if he were made of gold, would not be worth what his talent makes him, was pleasant, and flattered, I think, to be considered in that way; no one has yet called him a "genius" nor do I. But I treated him as one, and with childlike artifice made him swallow an enormous amount of flattery. Bojidar came for a few minutes in the evening; he was in an amiable mood and agreed with me in everything; he is a friend of the family and is very happy to meet Bastien and other celebrities.

But, in order that Bastien should not imagine that I carry my admiration for him to excess, I coupled his name with that of Saint-Marceaux, and spoke of them as "you two." He remained until midnight. He thought a bottle I had painted very good, and added: "It is like that that you must work;

Digitized by Google

have patience and concentration, do your best and try to reproduce nature faithfully."

Tuesday, December 26th.—Well, it seems that I am ill, the doctor who examined me does not know me and has no interest in deceiving me; the right lung is affected, and will never be completely cured; but, if I take care of myself, it will not grow worse, and I can live as long as anyone. Yes, but the progress of the disease must be arrested by violent measures, burnings and blisterings, everything delightful, in short. A blister means a yellow stain for a year. I shall have to conceal the mark in the evening by wearing a bunch of flowers high upon the right shoulder.

I will wait a week longer; if the complication continues and I am no better, I will consent to the outrage.

God is wicked.

Thursday, December 28th.—This then, is what the matter is—I am a consumptive. He told me to-day: "We must try and cure you; take care of yourself or you will regret it." My doctor is a young man and seems very intelligent; to my objections to the blisters and the other atrocities, he answered, that if I did not consent, I would regret it; that he had never in his life seen so extraordinary an invalid, and that no one would ever guess from my appearance the nature of my malady; and, indeed, although both lungs are affected, the right being much the worse however, I look as healthy as possible.

The first time that I felt a pain in my left lung was when I was leaving the holy catacombs of Kieff, where we had gone to ask the good God and the relics of the saints to cure me, our prayers being reinforced by money and masses.

A week ago there was scarcely anything noticeably the matter with my left lung. The doctor asked me if any of my family had had consumption.

"Yes, my grandpapa's father and his two sisters, the Countess de Toulouse-Lautrec and the Baroness Stralborne—a great-

Digitized by Google

grandfather and two great-aunts." At all events, I have consumption.

I tottered a little as I descended the stairs of the good man, who is so interested in such an original invalid. The disease can be checked if I do what is necessary; that is to say, be blistered and go South, disfigure my shoulders for a year, and exile myself.

What is a year in comparison with a whole life? and besides, my life is so beautiful!

I am very calm and I am a little astonished at being the only one who is in the secret of my misfortune. And the fortune-tellers who predicted so much happiness for me? However, the Jacob woman foretold an illness, and here it is. For her prediction to be entirely realized, there are lacking: Great success, money, marriage, and then the love of a married man. This trouble with the left lung worries me, though. Potain would never tell me that my lungs were affected; he employed the words customary in such cases, the bronchial tubes, bronchitis, etc. It is much better to know the truth, and I will do everything, except go away this year.

Next winter, I can have my picture of the "Holy Women" as an excuse for my journey. To go this winter would be only to begin over again the follies of last year. I will do everything except go South, and I will trust in the grace of God.

What made this doctor say so much is, that, since he has been attending me, my lungs have grown worse. He was treating me for my ears; I spoke to him of my lungs only by chance and in a laughing way, and then he examined me and prescribed for me (that was a month ago), insisting upon blisters. I could not bring myself, however, to agree to them, as I hoped that the disease would not advance so quickly. So, then, I am a consumptive, and have been so for the last two or three years. The disease is not enough advanced to cause my death, but it is very annoying.

Digitized by Google

But how, then, can my healthy appearance be explained, and the fact that my dresses, made before I was ill, and before there was any thought of anything the matter with me, are too tight now? I suppose I shall grow thin suddenly; perhaps it is because I am young and have broad shoulders and a full chest. All my troubles do not seem to affect my personal appearance.

If I am granted ten years more of life, and during those ten years fame and love, I shall be content to die at thirty. If there were anyone with whom I could make the bargain, I would propose this: To die at thirty, on condition of a happy, successful life from now till then.

But I would like to get well, that is to say, to have the malady arrested; it can never be cured, but one can live with it for a long time, as long as anyone else, in fact. I am a consumptive; that is settled. I will apply as many blisters as they please, but I must paint. I can cover up the stain with flowers, lace, tulle, and a thousand pretty things that are used entirely for ornament. Besides, I am not obliged to be blistered all my life. If I take care of myself for a year or two, I shall be as well as anybody; I shall be young; still—I—

Ah! I was right when I said that I was doomed to die young. As God can not give me what would make life bearable, He evades the difficulty by killing me. After loading me with misfortunes, He kills me to crown His work. I was right when I said that I was going to die; things could not go on as they were; this thirst for everything, these colossal aspirations, could not continue. I told you so a long time ago, years ago, at Nice, when I foresaw vaguely all that would be necessary to make life possible for me; but others have even more than I longed for, and they do not die!

I shall tell no one, except Julian. He dined here to-night, and when we were alone for a moment, I nodded my head significantly, pointing to my throat and chest. He would not believe it; I appeared so strong. He tried to comfort me by

Digitized by Google

mentioning several of his friends, in regard to whose condition the physicians had been mistaken. Incidentally, he asked me what my ideas were regarding heaven. I told him that heaven had treated me very badly. "As to my ideas regarding it," I added, "I care very little about it." He thinks, however, that I believe there is another life. "Yes, it is possible." I read to him then Musset's "Hope in God," and he recited to me Franck's invocation, or imprecation, "I Must Live."

I, too, wish to live. This position of being sentenced to death, as it were, has something of the ghastly humorous about it. It is an emotion, a sensation, a chance to pose; I am a mystery; death has touched me with his finger; there is a certain charm about it, and it is a novelty, at all events.

To be able to talk *in earnest* of my death is interesting and it amuses me. It is a shame that I can not conveniently have any other audience than my confessor, Julian.

Saturday, December 30th.—The disease is progressing. There! I commence to exaggerate again; yet, no, it is true that I am worse and shall never be well again, and the good God—no, He is neither just nor good, although He will probably punish me all the more for daring to say it—God frightens me so, that I am going to submit to His will, although He will not count it in my favor, because it is a submission impelled by fear.

I cough a great deal, and there are strange rumblings in my chest. Well, let us put off everything until the 14th. If I can only keep moderately well, without fever, and my face with a healthy color! That is the difficult part of it. Perhaps it is too late; this particular disease makes such rapid progress. Both lungs; think of it!

Ah! misery!

Sunday, December 31st.—It was too dark to paint, so we went to church, and afterward to the exhibition in the Rue de Sèze of the works of Bastien, Saint-Marceaux, and Cazin. It was

Digitized by Google

the first time that I had ever seen any of Cazin's paintings, and they captivated me entirely.

They are poetry itself; but Bastien's "Evening in the Village" is in no way inferior to any picture by this poet-painter named Cazin; and observe that Bastien has often been accused of excelling in execution only. I passed a delightful hour, and thoroughly enjoyed myself. There has never been a sculptor like Saint-Marceaux. The words so often used, and which have therefore become so meaningless, "*It is as natural as life*," are in his case absolutely true; and besides his power, which in itself would be sufficient to render him famous, there is in his work a depth of thought, an intensity of feeling, a certain mysterious something, which stamps him not only as a man of enormous talent, but almost as an artist of genius.

He is young still, and he is yet living, so of course I appear to be guilty of exaggeration.

Just for the moment, I am inclined to rank him above Bastien.

I am determined upon one thing, and that is, that I will have a picture by one of them and a statue by the other.

Digitized by Google

1883.

Monday, January 1st.—Gambetta, who had been wounded and ill for many days, has just died.

I can give you no idea of the strange effect his death has produced. It is almost incredible. He was so much a part of the entire country that one can not imagine the country existing without him. Triumph, defeat, caricature, accusation, praise, blame—he experienced them all. The papers speak of his fall; he never fell! And his ministry! Is it fair to judge of a ministry which lasted only six weeks? What folly and what injustice! People expect a man to be a Sully in forty days, and when constantly threatened with an overthrow for some totally absurd reason.

He is dead, in spite of his seven physicians and all the hopes dependent upon him and the eager desires to save him. Why should I take care of myself? Why should I worry? Why should I suffer? Death frightens me, now that I see it face to face.

Yes, it seems to me that I am going to die—soon. Ah, how I feel my littleness! And yet, what is the use? Why should I feel it? There must be something beyond this world; this transitory existence is not enough, it is out of all proportion to our thoughts and aspirations. There must be something beyond; if there is not, this life would be inexplicable and God would be absurd.

The life to come—there are moments when one catches glimpses of it that are both strange and terrifying

Wednesday, January 3d.—I have been reading the papers, which are full of Gambetta, and it seems as if my head were

Digitized by Google

encircled by a band of fire. The patriotic tirades, with the sonorous words, patriot, great citizen, national mourning, have powerfully affected me. I can not work; I have tried to force myself to do so, and it was this false coolness the first day after his death that made me commit the irreparable and always-to-be-regretted mistake of remaining in Paris instead of hastening to Ville d' Avray as soon as the news was received, and, seeing the death-chamber and making a sketch of it. I shall never learn how to seize my opportunities.

Thursday, January 4th.—They brought the coffin to the Palace and the President of the Chamber received it. "I thank you for having brought him here," he said to Spuller, with the tears running down his cheeks. The austere, cold, grave Brisson in tears! He was not his friend. "I thank you for having brought him here!" There was in that speech more pathos than will ever be found in any drama.

We could not get in, although we waited in line for two hours. The crowd was respectful enough, if one takes into consideration the French character, the elbowing, the jam, the talking, the perpetual temptation to be witty apropos of everything, and the funny things that inevitably happened in such a mixed multitude.

But when there was any loud laughter, there were people who imposed silence by crying: "It is indecent; respect his memory!" Everywhere were sold photographs, medals, the illustrated papers, and a book called "The Life and Death of Gambetta." It hurt me to see the brutal publication of the event and the clamor over it, natural as it was, however.

Saturday, January 6th.—We viewed the funeral procession from the windows of No. 240 Rue de Rivoli, the house of the Servian minister, Marinovitch, the brother-in-law of the Princess Karageorgevitch. It would have been difficult to have had a better place.

At 10 o'clock the cannon announced the starting of the procession, and we went to our places.

Digitized by Google

The funeral car, preceded by military buglers on horseback, musicians playing a funeral march, and three wagons covered with wreaths, was very imposing, and did great credit to the two Bastien-Lepages, who designed it. Through the tears that the spectacle drew from me, I recognized the two brothers walking quite near their work, the architect almost holding one of the cords of the pall. His brother had generously yielded to him the place of honor. The car was low, as if weighed down with sorrow, covered with a cloth of black velvet, upon which were flung here and there wreaths; the coffin was wrapped in flags. I would have liked something more majestic, perhaps because I am accustomed to the pomps of the church. But they wished, and rightly, to avoid the regular hearse and to imitate a sort of antique car, which made one think of the body of *Hector* brought back to Troy.

After three wagon-loads of flowers and many gigantic wreaths carried by men on foot, one might think that it was enough; but the three wagon-loads were almost forgotten in what followed, for never, as everyone says, has there been such a procession of flowers, flags, and wreaths.

I acknowledge, without any feeling of shame, that I was completely overwhelmed by the magnificence of it all. I was moved, unnerved, excited. Again and again went by wreaths of all sorts, colors, and sizes; banners and streamers with patriotic inscriptions and fringes of gold which glittered through the crape veilings; avalanches of flowers, whole gardens of roses, mountains of violets and immortelles, and another band whose funeral march, played too quickly, died away in the distance in the saddest of notes. The sound of the footsteps on the smooth pavement of the streets made me think of a shower of tears. Delegation after delegation passed, committees, associations, Paris, France, Europe, the industries, the arts, the schools, the flower of civilization and intelligence.

And again came drums veiled in crape, and buglers.

Digitized by Google

The men of the life-saving stations were applauded, as were also the students, who saluted as if to say: "There is, perhaps, *another* among us." Then, another funeral march and more wreaths. The handsomest floral-pieces were saluted with murmurs of admiration. Algiers was applauded. When the deputation from Belleville passed, with that faculty of assimilation which I possess to such a degree, I felt a sort of tender pride, which made me shade my eyes. But when the monumental wreaths of the cities of Alsace-Lorraine appeared, and the tri-colors draped with black, there was a shudder in the crowd which drove back the tears. The procession still went on, wreaths succeeded wreaths, and the banners and flowers flashed in the sunshine through veils of crape.

It was not a funeral procession, but a triumphal march. I do not know why I may not say an apotheosis. A whole nation marched behind that casket, and all the flowers of France were cut to honor the genius atrociously murdered at the age of forty-four, and who embraced in his own person all the generous aspirations of this generation; who represented the entire life of the young country; who was in himself the head and the hope of a regenerated nation.

Dead at forty-four! And with only time to prepare the ground for his work of retaliation and greatness.

The wonderful procession lasted more than two hours and a half, and finally the crowd, or at least the thoughtless and indifferent portion of the crowd, broke in upon it, thinking no longer of anything, except to laugh at the fright of the horses in the tail end of the pageant. There has never been anything like it; the music, the flowers, the corporations, and the children, seeming, in the pale golden mist, to be like the figures of an apotheosis. The sun, piercing through the fog, and the flowers, made one think it the triumphal progress of some young god.

Putting politics entirely out of the question, everybody tried to show respect and tender regrets to the dead. He was

Digitized by Google

the friend and intellectual comrade of all this generation. He represented youth, the arts, the republic, Paris, France. The world without him, seems to me like a piece of embroidered cloth, out of which the chief ornament has been cut, leaving only a mark and some frayed threads.

Ah, overwhelm him with flowers, wreaths, funeral marches, flags, delegations, and honors, oh, impatient, ungrateful, unjust people! It is ended now. Wrap in tri-colored bunting the mournful box which holds the remains of that man of brilliant intellect! You are so worthy to honor that mutilated body, you who did your best to poison the last year of the great man's life. All is ended. Nothing remains but petty men stupefied before the yawning grave of the one who annoyed them so by his superiority. How many are there who have been accustomed to say beneath their breath, that Gambetta, by his absorbing genius, prevented them from making a place for themselves? Step forward! There is plenty of room for you now! Oh, common-place, jealous fools, his death will not transform you.

We returned home about 3 o'clock. The Champs Elysées were gray and deserted, where, so short a time ago, he drove —gay, young, living, in that very simple carriage, for which he was so much reproached. What folly! for, intelligent men, far-seeing, educated Frenchmen and patriots, *could not, on their soul and conscience*, believe in the infamies with which Gambetta was charged.

They say that his seat is already taken by an *insect* of the Chamber. There is, then, no one to oppose this gross insult to the memory of the one who made illustrious the tribune of that Chamber, the portico of which is hung with wreaths, and veiled like a widow with an enormous crape scarf, which is draped above it, and envelopes it in its transparent folds.

That veil is an inspiration of genius, and no more striking decoration could have been invented. The effect is wonderful, and it strikes a cold chill to the heart, as if it were a

Digitized by Google

black flag flung out as a token that the fatherland was in danger.

Monday, January 8th.—Really, that man dominated France, and almost Europe. The whole world must feel a sense of loss; it seems as though there was nothing more to read in the papers, nothing more to be done in the Chamber.

There are, doubtless, more useful men, obscure workers, and inventors, patient administrators, but they will never have his prestige, his magic, his power. And yet, to excite enthusiasm and devotion, to group and unite parties, to be the heroic spokesman of the country, is not that to be useful, skillful, admirable? To be the personification of his country, to be the flag toward which all eyes are turned at the moment of danger, is not that worth more than all the virtues and wise plannings of over-ripe politicians? Heavens! If Victor Hugo should die this evening, it would do no harm to anyone; his work will remain, whatever happens, and it matters little whether he dies to-day, or died ten years ago; his career is accomplished. But Gambetta was the life and the light of each new day; he was the soul of the republic, he was the glory or the downfall, the triumph or the ridicule of the whole country. Never again shall we hear an inflection of the voice, nor see a gesture of the hand of that man who was unsurpassed both in speech and action. He was the wonderful incarnation of a party which embraces almost all France; he was the dispenser of all that makes hearts vibrate with sympathy, fear, envy, admiration, or hatred; and it is all ended forever!

Tuesday, January 9th.—If it were possible to describe my feelings, I would say that I was in despair at Gambetta's death. I wept for the little prince as one weeps over an affecting melodrama; the fate of that boy, killed so far away in a foreign land, was tragic and touching. But, to express what I mourn for now, I should have to have the honor of being French, and the happiness of being a man.

Tuesday, January 16th.—Emile Bastien took us to Gam-

Digitized by Google

betta's house, at Ville d'Avray, where his brother is working. If I had not seen it myself, I would not believe that the house could be so miserable, for modest would not describe it at all. The kitchen is the only decent place in the whole house.

The dining-room is so small and so low, that I wondered how there was room to place the coffin there, and how it was possible for his famous friends to gather round it.

The *salon* is a little larger, but bare and uncomfortable. A wretched staircase leads to the bed-chamber, which filled me with astonishment and indignation. What! It was in that miserable cage, the ceiling of which I could literally touch with my hand, that they left, for six months, a sick man of Gambetta's build, and in winter, with the windows closed! Think of it! A large, asthmatic, wounded man!

He died in that chamber, with miserable, cheap paper on the walls, and furnished with a black bed, two desks, cracked mirrors between the windows, and old, ragged, red curtains. A poor student would have been better lodged.

This man, who has been so deeply mourned, was never loved. Surrounded, as he was, by Jews, speculators, and schemers, he had no one who loved him for himself, or even for his fame.

But he should not have been left for an hour in that unhealthy, miserable place.

What! Could the dangers of an hour's journey be compared to the dangers of remaining, without air, in that horrible little room? Carried on a mattress, he could have been transported without disturbing him in the least.

Lo, this is Ville d'Avray, which was depicted to us in the journals as a second edition of Barras' residence; and they said that Gambetta was entirely given up to ease and luxury. What an outrage it was!

Bastien-Lepage was working at the foot of the bed. Everything remains as it was—the sheets, the eider-down quilt, which still retains the impress of the body, and the flowers on

Digitized by Google

the bed. The engravings do not give any idea of the dimensions of the room, a large part of which is taken up by the bed. Bastien's picture is truth itself. The head thrown back is shown in a three-quarter view, and the face has that serenity which comes after great suffering—a serenity which has in it something both of this world and the world beyond. You fancy you see before you the body itself, stretched motionless upon the bed, with the breath just departed. It is very impressive. I felt my limbs tremble with emotion as I gazed at it.

Bastien must be a very happy man. I am a little ill-at-ease in his presence. Although he has the physique of a young man of twenty-five, he has that amiable, unaffected serenity that is a characteristic of great men—of Victor Hugo, for example. I shall end by thinking him handsome. At all events, he possesses that infinite charm of people who are strong and brilliant, and who are aware of it, without arrogance or conceit.

I watched him working, while he talked with Dina. The others remained in another room.

Upon the wall can still be seen the mark of the bullet that killed Gambetta. Bastien pointed it out to us; and then the calm of the room, the faded flowers, the sunshine through the window—all this affected me to tears. He had his back turned, and was absorbed in his painting, so, in order not to lose the benefit of my sensitiveness, I abruptly held out my hand to him, and left the room quickly, with my face bathed in tears. I hope that he noticed it. It is horrid—yes, horrid—to have to confess that one always thinks of the effect.

Monday, January 22d.—For two months I have gone twice a week to the doctor recommended by Monsieur Duplay, who, as you will remember, had not the time to attend to me himself. The treatment, which was certain to bring about such good results, has not done so. I am no better; but they *hope* that I will be no worse; "And if you are no worse, you may consider yourself fortunate." It is hard.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, January 24th.—After a wearisome day of painting, we went to Etincelle's, where there were Monsieur Bocher, the business man of the Orleans family, and two others, one of whom was a tall, strong man, almost a Cassagnac, but spoiled by the eye-glasses he wore. I listened in silence for twenty-five minutes, while they talked of the horrors of the Revolution, the crimes of France since '89, etc. It would have been only too easy to have answered them, especially as I read every night, before going to sleep, two chapters of Michelet's Revolution. However, when old Bocher went, I made the mistake, probably, of declaring that I held abominable opinions.

"What! Republican?"

How could I declare myself a Republican in that Louis XVI. *salon*, with Etincelle in a gown of royal-purple velvet, enthroned in a white and gold arm-chair? I like her odd, charming face very much.

I managed to withdraw from the difficulty by saying that the intentions of Republicans were admirable, their impulses most generous, etc.; that all parties committed crimes, with the excuse that they had the future welfare of the vast majority in view; that it was natural to be mistaken as to what was right—in short, I made a modest but determined apology for the Revolution, laying much stress on the sentimental side of it. Etincelle strove to console mamma, who was distressed at my outbreak, by saying that what was generous and heroic in it all would naturally find an echo in my young heart, etc. The gentleman with the eye-glasses had listened to me, uttering now and then a word or a phrase in the Cassagnac style, and, when we left, he said how much he regretted not to have been able to come to our reception (he had received an invitation through Saint-Amand). He exchanged several polite speeches with mamma, and expressed to me how honored, flattered, and delighted he was to have made my acquaintance. I replied by a simple bow.

Digitized by Google

Thursday, February 22d.—The head of the smallest of the boys is entirely painted.

I played Chopin upon the piano, and Rossini upon the harp, all alone, by myself, in the studio. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and through the large window could be seen the clear, blue, exquisite sky. I thought of my picture of the "Holy Women," and I became so enthusiastic over what my imagination conjured up, that I was afraid someone else would do a similar picture before me, and that thought troubled the profound tranquillity of the evening.

There are certain delights which surpass everything else. I have been very happy this evening, for I have read "Hamlet" in English and reveled in Ambroise Thomas' music.

There are dramas which can always move one, and which contain immortal characters. *Ophelia*, pale and fair, goes to one's heart. *Ophelia!* It makes one long to experience an unhappy love affair. *Ophelia*, with her arms full of flowers; *Ophelia* dead—it is all so beautiful.

There should be some way of preserving reveries like mine of this evening, that is to say, all the poetical thoughts that pass through one's head should not be lost, but should be collected in some way. Does this journal answer the purpose? No; it is too long. Ah, if God would permit me to paint a picture; a real, a great picture! This year, I shall exhibit again only a sort of study.

A study inspired by Bastien?

Why, of course; his painting is so like nature, that if one copies nature faithfully, one's pictures are certain to resemble his.

His faces are living ones, not fine specimens of painting, like those of Carolus Duran. They are flesh, human flesh; they live, they breathe. It is not a question of skill nor of a fine touch. It is nature itself, and it is sublime.

Saturday, February 24th.—Do you know that my thoughts are continually occupied with Bastien-Lepage? I am accus-

Digitized by Google

tomed, when by myself, to constantly repeat this name; but, in the presence of others, I avoid doing so—as if it were something to be ashamed of. And when I do speak of him, it is with a tender familiarity which seems to me natural—taking into consideration his talent—but which might be wrongly interpreted.

What a shame that he can not come here as his brother does!

And what should I do with him if he did? Make a friend of him, of course. What! You do not believe in friendship? Why, I would worship my friends who had attained celebrity, and not out of vanity; but because I really prefer such people, because of their gifts, their mind, their talent, their genius. Artists of all kinds are a race apart. When we have passed a certain mediocrity, we find ourselves in a purer atmosphere; in a circle of the elect where we can take hands and dance around in honor of—what am I saying? The truth is, Bastien has a fascinating face.

I am very much afraid that my painting resembles his. I copy nature very carefully, I know; but still I keep thinking of his pictures. Besides, a talented artist, who cares sincerely for nature, and who wishes to copy it, would certainly resemble Bastien.

If all goes well, I shall have my picture finished in four or five days. Yes, but—

Sunday, February 25th.—I have really thought for a moment that I had painted something, and I was satisfied with myself for that moment. Now, I am oppressed with fear, for if it is not very good, it will be doubly painful.

Tuesday, February 27th.—This is a series of gay days for me. I sing, laugh, and talk, and Bastien-Lepage is the continual refrain of all. Not his person, nor scarcely his talent, nothing except his name; but I am worried lest my picture shall resemble his. He has painted lately such a lot of boys and girls; his "*Pas-Mèche*," for instance. What could be more beautiful than that?

Digitized by Google

Well, my picture represents two little boys walking hand-in-hand along the sidewalk. The elder is seven years old, and is looking straight before him with a leaf between his teeth. The smaller one is looking at the passers-by and has one hand thrust into the pocket of his little trousers. I do not know what to think, for I was really satisfied with it this evening.

But this evening I had an hour of intense delight. "What," you ask me, "did Saint-Marceaux or Bastien come to see you?" No, but I made a model of *my statue*.

Do you understand? I intend, immediately after the 15th of March, to make a statue. During my life, I have modeled two groups and two or three busts, all of which I abandoned before they were half finished; because, when working alone and without instruction, I could only work at something in which I was interested, into which I could throw my whole life and soul, and not a mere studio exercise.

I have conceived a figure and I have an intense longing to execute it.

It will be bad, but what does that matter? I was born a sculptor. I adore the human figure. Color can never impress me as the figure can, although I am also very fond of color. Imagine, in sculpture, a fine gesture, a beautiful attitude. Look at it from whatever point you like, the outlines change, but the meaning of the figure is the same.

Oh, happiness! Oh, delight!

My figure is a weeping woman, standing, with her face buried in her hands. You know that movement of the shoulders there is, when one weeps.

I wanted to kneel down before it. I said a thousand foolish things. The model is ten inches high, but the statue will be life-size. It will be an outrage on common-sense. And yet, why?

Finally, I tore up a fine *batiste* chemise to wrap up the frail statuette. I love this clay better than my own flesh.

Digitized by Google

And then, as my eyes are not particularly good, if I could not see to paint, I could model. The white, wet cloth is beautiful as it covers and drapes, in graceful folds, the little statuette. As I look at it, I can imagine what it ought to be. I wrapped it up with respect; it is fine, delicate, noble!

Wednesday, February 28th.—The picture will be finished to-morrow. I shall have spent nineteen days on it. If I had not painted out one of the boys, because he looked too old, it would have been finished in fifteen days.

Saturday, March 3d.—Tony came to see the picture. He is very much pleased, and praised one of the heads very highly.

"You have never done anything so good. It is well drawn and the coloring is good. It is really excellent. Brava, Mademoiselle!"

And so he went on for some time, so it really must be very good. I can scarcely believe it. I have the clothes to paint, and I want also to touch up the face of the smaller boy, which is not bad, but not so good as the other. Tony really seemed to think it good, and yet I am not satisfied; it does not make me happy. Ordinarily, I should have danced with joy all day long.

What is the reason that I am not delighted, for he has never said so much to me before? Do I suspect him of flattery? Oh, no. I might have done better still, or at least it seems to me so, and I am going to try to accomplish more with the other figure.

He is satisfied, that is evident. I would like to know what he said to the others.

Is it only relatively very good, very good for me; or is it really good? I can imagine it different, I would like to paint it over again. I can do better.

Wednesday, March 14th.—Julian came at last to see the picture. I had not asked him to do so, but we had exchanged letters, very diplomatic on both sides. He feels that he has been to blame, and I triumph modestly.

Digitized by Google

He finds it very good.

I kept him to breakfast—a stroke of policy worthy of Monsieur Grévy.

Thursday, March 15th.—There! It is ended! At 3 o'clock I was still working, but we had several callers and I had to stop. There were Madame and Mademoiselle Canrobert, Alice, Bojidar, Alexis, the Princess, Abbema, and Madame Kanchine. Robert-Fleury came in the morning. We all went to Bastien's to see his picture of "Love in the Village." A young girl is standing in an orchard with her back to the spectator; she is leaning against a hedge, with her head bent, and holding a flower in her hand; on the other side of the hedge is a young man, facing the spectator; his eyes are cast down and he is looking at his fingers, which he is twisting nervously about. It is full of poetry and exquisite in sentiment.

As for the execution, it is nature itself. There is also a little portrait of old Madame Drouet (Victor Hugo's guardian angel), which is a miracle in point of truth, sentiment, and resemblance. None of his pictures resemble each other; they are like living beings. He is a painter, a poet, a psychologist, a metaphysician, a creator.

His portrait of himself, which was in a corner, is a masterpiece. And he has not reached his highest point yet; I do not mean that anyone could work harder or do better than he has done, but we expect from him a great picture in which he will attain such heights that no one will dare to deny his genius.

The young girl with the braided hair and the flower in her hand, is a poem.

No one has ever entered more into the reality of life than Bastien. Nothing can be more elevated and more wonderfully human than his pictures. The life-size dimensions of them contribute also toward rendering their truth more striking. Who would you cite to me as his superiors? The Italians? They are painters of religious, and therefore conventional,

Digitized by Google

subjects. There are some sublime artists among them but they follow in the same rut, and they do not touch the heart or the intelligence. The Spaniards? Brilliant and charming. The French are brilliant, dramatic, or academic.

Millet and Breton are doubtless poetical. But Bastien unites everything. He is king of all, not only by his miraculous execution, but by the depth and intensity of his feeling. Observation could not be carried further, and Balzac says that the genius of observation is almost the sum total of human genius.

I am writing, seated on the floor, just before going to bed, I could not rest until I had told all this.

Thursday, March 22d.—I sent for two workmen yesterday, and they constructed the frame-work for the life-size statue I shall make after the little clay model. To-day I worked on it, and gave it the desired pose. My mind is full of my picture of the "Holy Women." I shall try to paint next summer, and in sculpture my great ambition is an "Ariadne." Meanwhile, I will do this woman, which is, in fact, the other Mary of the picture. In sculpture, and without drapery, taking a young girl for a model, it would make a charming "Nausicaa." She has let her head fall upon her hands and she is weeping. There is in the pose such real abandon, a despair so girlish, so sincere, and so sad, that I am delighted with it.

Nausicaa, the daughter of the King of the Phœacians, is one of the most charming figures in the classics; a secondary character, to be sure, but still attractive, touching, and interesting.

I entirely agree with Ouida, who wishes old *Penelope* had been strangled and *Ulysses* married to the lovely young girl who leaned against the rose-colored marble column of her father's palace and fell in love with the crafty *Ulysses*, as he recited his adventures. No word was exchanged between them, and he went away to seek once more his own country.

Digitized by Google

And *Nausicaa* remained upon the shore, watching the great white sail fade away in the distance, and when there was no longer anything to be seen upon the blue horizon, she buried her face in her hands and wept bitterly.

Sunday, March 25th.—Ever since 2 o'clock yesterday, I have been in a sort of trance, which you will understand when I tell you the reason.

Villevieille came to see me and asked me if I had heard any news from the *Salon*. "Why, no." "What, you don't know anything?" "Nothing." "You have passed." "I have not heard of it." "There can be no doubt about it, because they have reached the letter *C*." And that was all. I can scarcely write, my hands tremble and I feel completely disorganized.

Then Alice came and said: "Your picture is accepted."

"Accepted how? Without a number?"

"It is not known yet."

I had no doubt but that it would be accepted.

And then mamma, my aunt, and everybody were in such a state of excitement that it annoyed me in the highest degree. I made an heroic effort to appear as usual and to see visitors.

Monsieur Laporte came, but I was dressing.

I sent forty dispatches, and five minutes afterward, I received a message which I copy word for word. "Oh, ingenuousness! Oh, sublime ignorance! I am going to enlighten you at last. Your picture is accepted with a number three at least, for I know some one who wished a number two for you. And now, conqueror, I salute you and offer you my congratulations."

It is not joy that I feel, but it is tranquillity.

I do not think that a number one would give me pleasure, after these twenty-four hours of humiliating anxiety. They say that joy is keener than suffering. Not with me. Difficulties, anxieties, and sufferings spoil everything for me.

Tuesday, March 27th.— I have been looking through the "Odyssey," and Homer does not give the scene that I imagined. Of course, it must be the logical and inevitable conclusion of

Digitized by Google

the events preceding; but still he does not give it. But *Nausicaa's* words, full of praise and admiration of *Ulysses*, show that he must have made a vivid impression upon her. She took him for a god, and he returned the compliment by imagining her to be a goddess. Of course, it must have happened as I said.

I will read once more the words of *Ulysses*. When he appeared naked before the young Phœacians, they all fled, except *Nausicaa*. *Minerva* gave her courage. The old fox, very handsome, however, needed garments and protection, and he compared *Nausicaa* to Diana. Then she must have been tall and graceful. And his eyes, he said, had never beheld such a mortal. He compared her also to a palm-tree, which he saw once at Delos, near the altar of Apollo, during a journey he made there accompanied by a large multitude, a journey which was for him the source of the greatest misfortunes.

He loaded her with flatteries, and presented himself before her in a poetical and majestic light as one worthy of the deepest interest because of his misfortunes; he seemed persecuted by the gods.

In my opinion, it is impossible that this young girl, whose beauty and intelligence rendered her the equal of the immortals, should not have been inspired with a very strong sentiment, especially prepared as she was for it by her dream.

Friday, March 30th.—To-day, I worked till 6 o'clock; at 6, as it was still light, I opened the window of my balcony to hear the church bells, and to breathe the air of spring as I played upon the harp.

I am calm. I worked hard all day, then I took a bath, dressed myself in white, and played on the piano, and now I am writing; I am calm, satisfied, and happy in this apartment arranged by myself, where I have everything close to my hand; it would be so pleasant to live this life, while waiting for fame. And even if fame were to come, I would devote

Digitized by Google

but two months in the year to the enjoyment of it, and the other ten I would shut myself up and work. Moreover, that is the only means to procure the two months in question. What troubles me is that I ought to marry, for marriage would be a way of escape from all these wounds to my pride.

"Why doesn't she marry?" people ask, and they credit me with being twenty-five years old which enrages me. If I were once married, it would be all different. Yes, but to whom? If I were only well, as I once was! But now I must have a man who is kind-hearted, and who has delicacy of feeling. He must love me, for I am not rich enough to marry one who would leave me to follow my own devices.

In all this, I do not speak from my heart. One can not foresee everything, and it all depends upon circumstances. Besides, it may never happen.

I have received the following letter:

"PALACE OF THE CHAMPS ELYSÉES, ASSOCIATION OF FRENCH ARTISTS FOR THE ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF FINE ARTS.

"Mademoiselle:—I write to you on the table of the committee-room to tell you that your Pastel Head has had a genuine success with the committee. I have no need to tell you that your paintings have been well received.

"This year is a real success for you, and I am very glad.

"With my most friendly regards,

"TONY ROBERT-FLEURY."

Well, and what then? The letter itself I shall pin in these pages, but I want to show it to a few friends first. Do you think I am wild with delight? Not in the least; I am very calm. Without doubt, I do not deserve to experience great delight, since such a happy piece of news does not disturb my equanimity in the least. And then, the fact that the letter is addressed to me makes it lose all its value. If I knew that such a letter had been sent to Breslau, or to any one else, I should be excessively annoyed. It is not because I value only what I do not possess, but because of my excessive modesty. I have no confidence in myself. If I believed that letter, I

Digitized by Google

should be too happy. So I am afraid to believe in good fortune. I am afraid to rejoice too soon, even when the cause for rejoicing is nothing wonderful.

Saturday, March 31st.—I went to see Julian this morning to hear him say flattering things to me. It seems that Bouguereau said to him: "You have a Russian girl who has sent something which is not bad—not bad at all." "And you know," added Julian, "that that is a great deal for Bouguereau to say of anyone who is not his pupil." In short, it appears that I shall have some sort of a mention.

Sunday, April 1st.—I went to the Louvre this morning with Alice Brisbane. She is not very interesting, as Breslau would have been, for instance; and there was no exchange of ideas between us; but she is a nice girl, of sufficient intelligence; she listened to me and I thought aloud. It was a sort of mental exercise. I spoke of all that was occupying my thoughts, and all that I desired; of Bastien, of course, who always figures largely in my conversations with Julian and Alice. I am very, very fond of his paintings, and I shall appear to you very blinded if I tell you that, after those old smoky canvases of the Louvre, my mind turned with pleasure to his pictures, bright and full of life as they are.

That was the impression that I felt this morning; I do not say it will be a lasting one.

I cough continually, and although I do not seem to grow thin, I begin to feel that I am ill. But I do not want to think about it. And why is my whole appearance so healthy, not only my color but my weight?

I try to find some cause for my sadness; but I can discover none, unless it be that I have done scarcely anything for the last two weeks.

My statue is falling to pieces, and this makes me lose a great deal of time.

To-morrow, at 1, I will begin to work again in earnest.

What vexes me a little is that the pastel is so good and the

Digitized by Google

paintings are simply fair. I feel, however, that I am capable now of producing a painting equally as good as the pastel—and you shall see.

I am not sad; I am simply feverish, and I have a difficulty in breathing. The right lung is growing worse.

Ah! fool that you are! you see yourself, so to speak, wasting away, and you do nothing! Why do you not use the blisters? It will be only a yellow stain for a year or two; and what is a year or two in comparison with life, beauty, work? I have no great need of that shoulder, and I can so easily cover up the marks.

Well, then? Well, then, one never really thinks one's self seriously ill.

Tuesday, April 3d.—The weather is delightful. I feel the strength and the power to paint a beautiful picture. I believe, I know I can do it.

It is spring, and that is one reason for my belief. In summer it is too hot to be out of doors and in winter it is too cold. In summer, only the mornings and evenings are pleasant; but now, every hour is a Paradise, and if I do not take advantage of it to paint in the open air, I shall be very culpable.

So, to-morrow, I will begin.

I feel within me the power to reproduce whatever appeals to my feelings. I feel a new strength, a confidence in myself, which trebles my ability. To-morrow I am going to begin a picture, the subject of which delights me; then I have, for the bad weather in autumn, another very interesting subject. It seems to me now that all my ideas will bear good fruit, and I am intoxicated at the thought.

Red-letter Day, Wednesday, April 4th.—My picture is to represent a group of six little boys, with their heads close together, half-length only. The oldest is twelve years and the youngest six. The oldest, who has his back partially turned, holds a nest in his hands—a nest which the others are examining. The attitudes are varied and natural. The youngest

Digitized by Google

has his back completely turned, his head erect, and his arms crossed.

This seems common-place in the description; but, in reality, all the heads together will make an exceedingly interesting picture.

Sunday, April 15th.—My disease has plunged me into a state of prostration which renders me indifferent to everything. Julian writes me that my picture is not yet hung; that Tony Robert-Fleury can not PROMISE (*sic*) to have it hung on the line; but, as it is not yet hung, what can be done will be done; that Tony Robert-Fleury hopes strongly (*sic*) that both painting and pastel will be well placed. I did not hope anything like this two months ago, and now I am as indifferent as if I were not concerned in the matter at all. This idea of a mention, which ought to make me faint with joy, now that they tell me "it is probable, certain even," causes me no surprise whatever. Life is logical, and we are prepared for all events. I regret that fact. I would like a thunderbolt, so to speak, a medal falling from the sky without a word of warning, and plunging me into an ocean of felicity.

Wednesday, April 18th.—Do you know what I am doing? I am attending a competition at Julian's studio. The model is a draped woman. It is very ugly; but, as the men's studios are to do the same subject, I have entered the competition in the vain hope of surpassing the men.

The decree will be made in four weeks, for the four studios are to do the same figure, each in its turn.

If I receive a mention this year, I shall have progressed more rapidly than Breslau, who had taken many lessons before going to Julian's.

I have been playing the piano. I began with the two divine marches of Chopin and Beethoven, and then I played at random all sorts of things, so exquisite that I fancy I can hear them now. And yet, is it not strange? I can not really recall a single note, and, if I desired to improvise now, I could not

Digitized by Google

do so. The hour, the mood, a certain indescribable something is necessary, and yet there are running through my head the most divine melodies. If I had the voice, I could sing ravishing, original, dramatic things. Ah! life is too short. We have no time to do anything. I would like to be a sculptor and to paint at the same time. It is not because I have an ambition to be a sculptor, but because I *see* beautiful things, and I feel an imperious necessity of reproducing what I see.

I have learned to paint, but I have not painted because I had a desire to make such or such a picture. Henceforth, I am going to mold clay to give a body to my visions.

Sunday, April 22d.—There were only two pastels accepted with a number one—Breslau's and mine. Breslau's is not on the line, but her portrait of the daughter of the editor of *Figaro* is. My pastel is not on the line either, but Tony Robert-Fleury assures me that it looks well, and that the picture below it is not a large one. The head of Irma is on the line, and in a corner—consequently in a place of honor. In short, he says that my pictures are well hung.

We have people to dine with us almost every evening. I listen to their conversation, and I say to myself: "Here are people who do nothing, and who spend their time in making silly and trivial remarks. Are they happier than I?" Their cares are of a different nature, but they suffer as much, although they do not enjoy everything as much as I do. Many things escape their notice; nothings, shadings, reflections, which open a field of thought to me, and are a source of pleasure unknown to the vulgar. But, perhaps, I am more apt than many to notice the beauties of nature, as well as the thousand details of Paris—a passing word, an expression in the eyes of a child or a woman, a gesture, all sorts of things. When I go to the Louvre, cross the court, mount the staircase in the furrow worn by millions of feet, open the door, see the people there, study them, try to discover something of their

Digitized by Google

inner lives, then I have a thousand varied and enchanting thoughts and impressions. If it be true, because I hear sometimes less well than others do, that I am inferior to the rest of the world, I have, perhaps, some compensations for it.

Ah, no. Everyone knows it, and it is the first thing they say when my name is mentioned: "She is a little deaf, you know." I do not understand how I can write it. Does one ever become accustomed to such a trouble? It is all very well when it happens to an old man, an old woman, or some unhappy creature; but not to a young girl like me, full of life, energy, and enthusiasm.

Friday, April 27th.—Tony Robert-Fleury came to see me yesterday and remained an hour. We spoke of my great picture, and he showed plainly that he had serious fears in regard to it.

He encouraged me greatly to persevere with my group of six boys. It is very difficult, but I have only to copy. One has always only to copy. To copy? That is easy to say; but to copy without any artistic sense, without any brain work, is stupid! One should copy with the soul as well as with the eyes. I did not say all this to Robert-Fleury. He would understand it; but he would add to it his ideas of classical interpretation, which I repudiate with all the strength of my being. Finally, he said that in a picture of this sort (my "Holy Women") it would be necessary to know things of which I have not the faintest idea. For example, drapery. *Quesaco?*

"Well, Monsieur, I will paint my drapery, since drapery there is, as I paint my modern garments."

"That would be frightful."

"Why? Were not the people that I am going to paint living and modern at one time?"

"Yes; but there are things in art which should be known. You can not paint drapery by chance. It must be arranged beforehand"

Digitized by Google

"Well, do not I, as an artist, arrange my garments of 1883 according to my own ideas? Do I copy them without choosing them? Is not choice one of the powers of an artist?"

"Certainly; you will not find in nature your picture ready-made for you."

I did not reply, for I should have been betrayed into saying things I would rather have left unsaid. But I shall not find my picture ready-made in nature.

What does that signify?

My picture is in my head, and nature will furnish me the means of executing it.

It is evident that a certain sentiment must be the governing power in all this. If I possess this sentiment all will go well; but if I do not possess it, studies of drapery will not give it to me.

I must find a landscape as near as possible like the one I have imagined, and that will not be difficult.

And I want two women models, whom I have already found, both good, and one surprisingly so.

And then? And then I want a place somewhere in the country, and fine weather to paint my figures.

The difficulty is that I shall not paint it this year. I shall not be able to go South until November; and, unless I do it entirely there, I shall have to wait until next summer to finish it.

I have a deep, enthusiastic, enormous conviction that it will be beautiful. I am also certain that the strength is increased tenfold when one is in love with one's work.

It even seems to me that a certain enthusiasm can supply the lack of almost everything. I will give you a proof of it. For five or six years I have ceased to play upon the piano; that is to say, for months I would not touch the keys, and then, perhaps, some day I would play five or six hours. Under such circumstances, the fingers become stiff; therefore, I no longer play before people, and the merest school-girl could

Digitized by Google

surpass me. But let me only hear a masterpiece, a march of Chopin's for example, or Beethoven's march, and I am possessed with the desire to play it, and in two or three days, if I play only an hour a day, I can play it very well indeed—as well as Dusantois, for instance, who took the first prize at the *Conservatoire*, and who practiced all the time.

Saturday, April 28th.—Russian Easter.

Sunday, April 29th.—To-morrow is varnishing-day. My picture is not on the line and my gown is ugly, and— Bah! that is silly and unworthy of me. This is the truth. I have to paint my six boys, full size, standing at the corner of a street near a lamp-post. I shall be interrupted for a month by my Russian trip, and shall return and finish the picture, which will probably bring me into October. In October I shall go to Jerusalem, and if I can paint my picture there, I shall remain there three or four months; if not, I shall remain a month, return here and go to the South, where I can paint my figures, and for the background make use of the sketches made in Jerusalem. In January I shall return to Paris and paint a picture of an interior, not so large as life, after the idea I brought from Mont Dore: "The Choir-Boy."

At the same time, I shall work on my statue, and I will be able to devote all my attention to it in Paris; that is to say, in July, August, and September, and January, February, and March. Yet I do not think "The Choir-Boy" will be painted if I paint the "Holy Women" and vice versa.

They are right to say that I waste my energies, that I expend my nervous strength for nothing, and that it is a shame. What! It depends upon me to succeed, and I can not?

We shall see!

I must try and concentrate my abilities.

Monday, April 30th.—I have had the honor of talking to Bastien-Lepage, and he has explained to me his "Ophelia."

He is an artist of no ordinary talent. He looks at his art from all points of view. What he said to me showed the deepest

Digitized by Google

knowledge of the human soul. It is really beautiful to understand art as he does, to feel it as he feels it. He does not see in *Ophelia* only a mad girl, but one miserably unhappy in love also—so unhappy that it has partially affected her brain. She is the incarnation of disenchantment, bitterness, despair, the end of everything. His *Ophelia* is most touching, sad, and heartrending. I am wild over it. What a magnificent thing genius is! This ugly little man appears to me more beautiful and more attractive than an angel. One longs to pass one's life in hearing him and watching him in his sublime labors. And then he speaks so simply. He answered to something that was said to him: "I find so much poetry in nature," with such a frank accent of sincerity that I was inexpressibly charmed.

I exaggerate—I feel that I exaggerate; but there is much truth in it all, nevertheless.

We went out together, and there was one supreme moment when I found myself in a group containing Carolus, Robert-Fleury, Jules Bastien, Emile Bastien, Carrier-Belleuse, Edelfelt, and Saint-Marceaux.

Tuesday, May 1st.—And the *Salon?* It is worse than usual. Dagnan does not exhibit; Sargent is mediocre; Gervex common-place; but Henner is charming. His picture is the figure of a nude woman reading. The light is artificial, and everything is bathed in a mist of such an exquisite tone that you feel as if you, yourself, were being gradually enveloped in the magic vapor. Jules Bastien admires it enormously. There is a painting of Cazin's which I like less than his landscapes; it represents Judith as she is leaving the city to meet Holofernes. I did not look at it long enough to feel the fascination which it is said to possess; but what did strike me was that Judith's appearance offered no excuse for Holofernes' infatuation.

Bastien-Lepage's picture did not completely carry me away. The two figures are irreproachable. The figure of the girl

Digitized by Google

standing with her back to the spectator and of whose face only the cheek is seen, the hand playing with a flower, evinces poetry, sentiment, and observation of the highest degree.

The back is a poem. The hand, of which only a glimpse is seen, is a masterpiece. You can feel what the artist wished to express. The girl has her head bent, and does not know what to do with her feet, which have assumed a charming attitude of embarrassment. The young man is very good also, but the girl is grace, youth, poetry itself. It is true, just, feeling, delicate, and fine.

The landscape, however, is thoroughly disagreeable. It is of too vivid a green and it is too obtrusive. Some say that the colors are laid on too thickly. At all events there is a lack of atmosphere, and the background is heavy.

And Breslau? Breslau's picture is good, but it does not entirely please me. It is well executed, but it tells no story; the coloring is pretty, but common-place. It represents a group—two girls, one brunette and one blonde, and a young man—taking tea by the fireside in a *bourgeois*, characterless interior. They are all too serious, and they do not seem to be enjoying themselves. The whole picture is meaningless. She who talks so much about feeling does not seem to be richly endowed with it. Her portrait is good, but that is all.

And I?

Well, the head of Irma is pleasing, and the execution possesses sufficient boldness. However, it is an unpretentious thing.

The painting seemed to me to have a sombre look, and, although it is a scene in the open air, there is no atmospheric effect. The wall does not look like a wall; it might be a sky, a bit of painted canvas, or anything you choose. The figures are good, but the background is disastrous; and yet it deserves a better place, especially as things infinitely inferior have been hung on the line. Everybody is agreed in saying that the heads, especially that of the elder boy, are excellent. It is

Digitized by Google

probable that I could have improved the rest, as it is a comparatively easy task, but I had not time.

Looking at my picture hanging there before me, I learned infinitely more than I could have learned at the studio in six months.

Wednesday, May 2d.—I ought to go to the opera, but for what reason? I mean, I thought for a moment of going, so that my beauty might be remarked and Bastien hear of it. But why should I do this? I do not know. It is a stupid idea, after all. Is it not a shame that I please people for whom I care nothing at all, and on the other hand, when I really want to make an impression, I can not?

I shall think of the opera, however; for, after all, it would be simply for the pleasure of going, as I am really not seriously provoked with that great artist. Would I marry him? No. Well, then, what do I want? Why am I so given to analyzing everything? I am very eager to please this great man, and that is all. And Saint-Marceaux also. Which one most? It does not matter; either would satisfy me. It would give me an interest in life. My feeling for these men has changed my face. I am much prettier; my complexion is fresh, clear, and velvety, and my eyes are bright and sparkling. It is curious. What must true love accomplish, if silly fancies produce an effect like this?

Friday, May 4th.—After all, that is not the question. Jules Bastien dined here this evening. I posed neither as a child nor a mad girl; I was neither silly nor pouting. He, on his side, was simple, bright, and charming, and we joked incessantly. There was not an instant of embarrassment. He is very intelligent; and then I do not believe in specialties for men of genius; a man of genius can be and ought to be everything he chooses.

He is lively, too; I feared that he would be insensible to that humor, which, to be really delicate, must be something midway between wit and nonsense. In short, like Roland's

Digitized by Google

mare, he possesses all qualities. He is insensible to love, however, or almost so. Isn't it stupid?

Sunday, May 6th.—There has been a great deal of talk about young Rochegrosse's picture. It represents *Astyanax* being snatched from *Andromache's* arms to be thrown over the ramparts.

It is an antique subject, but treated in an original and modern manner.

He is no imitator, and he draws his inspiration from no one. The coloring and the execution are both wonderfully vigorous. There is no one now who can equal him in those respects. And then, he is the son-in-law of Monsieur Th: de Banville—so the press is favorable to him.

Notwithstanding this latter detail, however, he is wonderfully talented. He is only twenty-four, and this is the second picture he has exhibited.

That is the way one ought to paint—composition, drawing, coloring, are all marvelously spirited.

His talents are well expressed by his name. Listen: Rochegrosse—*Georges Rochegrosse.* It is like a peal of thunder. And then the idyllic sounding—*Bastien-Lepage!* Rochegrosse has made his début in art like a torrent; it is possible that, later, his talent will take a more concentrated form, and he will seek sentiment and psychology like Bastien-Lepage.

And I? What does my name express? *Marie Bashkirtseff.* I would like to change it, for it sounds like something odd and harsh, although it has a certain promise of triumph, too; it has even a certain charm, something denoting pride and renown; but it has also a quarrelsome and jerky sound. *Tony Robert-Fleury* is as cold as an epitaph. And *Bonnat*, correct, vigorous; but short and without brilliancy. *Manet* sounds like an incomplete being, a pupil who promises much when he reaches fifty. *Breslau* is sonorous, calm, powerful. *Saint-Marceaux* is like *Bashkirtseff*, very nervous, but less harsh. *Henner* is mysterious and calm, with something graceful, like

Digitized by Google

the antique. *Carolus Duran* is a disguise. *Dagnan* is subtle, veiled, delicate, sweet, and strong. *Sargent* makes me think of his painting, of a false Velasquez, of a false Carolus, less than Velasquez, and yet good.

Monday, May 7th.—I have begun my boys all over again; I am drawing them full length on a larger canvas; it will be more interesting.

Tuesday, May 8th.—I live in my art, going down only to dine, and talking to no one.

I feel as though this was a new phase of existence. Everything outside of my art seems petty and uninteresting. A life, such as I am living now, might be beautiful.

Wednesday, May 9th.—This evening we entertained some odd people, who would have greatly shocked the society in which we move, but whom I found exceedingly amusing.

Jules Bastien, who is always preaching the economy of one's strength, and the concentration of everything upon one point, does not expend his energy uselessly. Well, with me, there is such an exuberance of everything that it is an absolute necessity for me to have some outlet for my energy. Of course, if conversation or laughter fatigue you, it is better to abstain from them, but—he must be right, however.

We went up to my studio, and, of course, my large picture was turned to the wall; and when Bastien attempted to see it, I almost quarreled with him in my endeavor to prevent him doing so.

I was extravagant in my praises of Saint-Marceaux; and Bastien said he was jealous of him, and he was going to attempt gradually to supplant him.

He has said this many times before; and, although it may be only a jest, it delights me.

I must make him believe that I admire Saint-Marceaux more than him—artistically, of course. I said to him: "You like him, do you not? You must like him."

"Yes; very much."

Digitized by Google

"Do you like him as much as I do?"

"Oh, no; I am not a woman. I like him, but—"

"But, it is not as a woman that I like him."

"Oh, yes; there is a little of that in your admiration for him."

"No, I assure you."

"Yes; and I am jealous of it. I am not dark and handsome, as he is."

"He looks like Shakespeare."

"There—you see!"

The real Bastien is going to detest me. Why? I don't know, but I fear that he will. We are hostile to one another; there are several inexplicable little things that make me feel it. We are not in sympathy, and I hesitate to say certain things before him which might make him—like me a little.

We hold exactly the same opinion in regard to art, and yet I do not dare to declare my opinions in his presence. Is it because I feel that he does not like me?

In short, there is a *something*—

Saturday, May 12th.—I passed the morning at the studio, chatting with the ladies there; and I caught Julian a moment, and begged him to come and see the picture of the boys.

You understand, I do not wish for advice, but simply the impression likely to be made on the public, and Julian is a fair representative of general opinion.

He came to dinner, and I had both canvases brought for his inspection. First, the group of boys. There are six of them; the tallest, with his back turned, is showing something to the other five grouped about him. Quite a space of the street is seen, and in the distance two or three little girls are walking away. He told me very decidedly to take out the lamp-post which was in the left-hand corner, and he was right. Otherwise he thinks that it is original, interesting, and that it is almost certain of success, being much better than the two boys exhibited in the *Salon;* he likes especially the hobble-

Digitized by Google

dehoy appearance of the principal boy, who is beginning to grow tall and is what little boys call a "big fellow."

In short, Julian this evening was perfect—thoughtful, delicate, and kind. He neither teased nor scolded me. I remarked it, and he said that he spoke to me according to what I had to show him, and that I was in a fair way to make up all that I had lost.

We spoke of the "Holy Women," and I explained to him my ideas in regard to the picture. We laughed together over Tony Robert-Fleury's draperies. Is it probable that these women wore beautiful draperies of blue and crimson cashmere? They had been following Jesus for months; they were revolutionists, Louise Michels, and all society frowned upon them. They had nothing to do with elegance and fashion.

And during the days that the great drama lasted, the trial and the crucifixion, must not they have been almost in rags? Julian says that the picture will be either sublime or a failure; and that I must be very careful of the Magdalen, for I want to do too much with it, and I must remember that in pictures of this class the greatest artists have met defeat.

However, I am started on it. I can fancy my picture just as it will be when it is finished. Nothing in the world can make me change any detail of it—no journey, no model, no advice. The effect of the preliminary sketch pleases Julian; but it is not yet what I would wish. I know the time of day I desire to represent—an early twilight; a calm in contrast with what has just passed. In the distance figures retreating after having placed Christ in the sepulchre; the two women alone have remained, overwhelmed by the catastrophe. Magdalen is represented in profile, her elbow upon her right knee, her chin in her hand, her eye fixed upon the entrance of the sepulchre. She is kneeling on her left knee, and the left arm hangs down by her side. The other Mary is standing a little in the rear, her head buried in her hands and her shoulders raised; the face can not be seen, and the pose must reveal the

Digitized by Google

very acme of grief, weariness, and despair; one must feel her hopelessness and the giving out of all her strength. All is finished! Julian thinks the position a very fine one. She is thinking nothing of any one else; she has abandoned herself to her misery.

The Magdalen will be the most difficult. She must be made to express stupor, horror, despair, prostration, and revolt. The revolt will be the hardest thing to depict.

And I have undertaken such a picture as this. Well, yes, I have, and of my own accord, and, God willing! I shall accomplish my purpose. Ah! He must know that I fear Him, and I will fall on my knees to implore Him to permit me to work. I deserve neither favors nor aid, but ask only that He may allow me to paint this picture.

But it may be a failure—a failure in the eyes of the public; it will none the less be a fine picture, though.

And I shall have my street boys to console me. If the "Holy Women" is a failure, it will be because it is too fine.

My *Salon* picture does not interest me. I did it for lack of anything better, and I did not have enough time.

Tuesday, May 15th.—This is all that I can think of to-night. The moon is beautiful, the skies are clear, the stars make me think of one of Cazin's pictures, and there is only art. I am contented not to have to go away again, to be able to finish the boys, and then the angler, and then the boy reading upon a bench, and then twenty-five or thirty sunsets.

Wednesday, May 16th.—It is so warm that life is possible only in the evening. I go up to my own room, very happy to be alone on this quiet floor, with the infinite heavens above me.

But in the spring-time one's thoughts do not turn to sentiment, but to childishness.

I can hear the whistle of the locomotive and the bell of the church in the Rue Brémontier. It is very poetical.

On these beautiful evenings, one ought to make excursions

Digitized by Google

into the country, upon the water or somewhere, with somebody. What somebody?

I think of all this Paris, of the Champs Elysées and the Bois, so full of life, while, as far as any participation in its gaiety is concerned, I might as well be in America. Do I do well or badly to devote my youth to ambitions which—in short, shall I receive a fair interest for the capital employed?

The whistle is very harmonious at night. A multitude of people are returning from the country, fatigued, dreamy, happy, worn out. The whistle again.

When I am celebrated, and that will be, perhaps, in a year—I am very patient, as if I were sure that—

The whistle again. They say that when the whistle can be heard so distinctly, there is a storm brewing; and that makes me think of *Domingue* in "Paul and Virginia," and what he says of the impending storm.

It is very difficult to read Balzac in my present state of mind; but I will read nothing else, as I do not wish to become excited.

Again the bell and the whistle.

Friday, May 18th.—To greatly desire the friendship of Bastien-Lepage would be to attach too much importance to that sentiment; to distort it, so to speak, and to place him in a false and unnatural position. His friendship would have been agreeable to me, as Cazin's or Saint-Marceaux's would be; but I am vexed that I have thought of him as a private individual. He is not—not great enough for that. He is not a god in art, like Wagner. Only under such conditions would it be admissible to entertain a profound admiration for him. What I desire is to be the mistress of an interesting *Salon;* and every time that it seems as if this hope were about to be realized, something happens to prevent it—here is mamma gone away and papa dying, perhaps.

I had a plan of giving every week a dinner, followed by a reception, for society people, say on Thursday, for instance,

Digitized by Google

and on Saturday another dinner for artists; the most distinguished of the artists, who had dined with me on the previous Saturday, might also appear at the Thursday evening receptions.

And then, the whole thing had to be given up; but I will try again, next year, as calmly as if I were sure of my power, as patiently as if I were to live forever, and as perseveringly as if my success were assured.

Now, may God simply remain neutral, and I will be as grateful to Him as if He had conferred some benefit upon me.

Friday, May 18th.—I am going to paint a decorative panel —"Spring." A woman leaning against a tree, her eyes closed, and smiling as if in a beautiful dream; all about her a delicate landscape, tender greens, pale rose-tints, apple and peach blossoms, fresh young shoots, all that gives to spring its enchanting coloring.

This has never been done in a realistic fashion. Several spring landscapes have been painted lately, but the figures have been old people, or washerwomen, or lepers. I want something quite different.

A thousand springs have been painted, but there has been nothing real about the landscapes. Bastien alone is capable of having my idea, and he has done nothing like it yet. The woman must seem to be enjoying the harmony of colors, the perfumes of the air, and the song of the birds. There must be sunlight in the picture. Bastien has painted only gray and shadowy atmospheres.

I want sunshine in my picture, and I will paint it at Nice, in an orchard. If I find a very poetic orchard, my woman shall be nude.

One must seem to hear the murmur of a brook, which flows at her feet, between banks sprinkled with violets, and with here and there patches of sunshine.

I want those spring tones which touch the very soul; I

Digitized by Google

want tender greens, enchanting pale rose-tints, and not wishy-washy yellows.

It must be an orgy of sweet notes; all the colors must be ravishing, with spots of sunlight here and there to give life to the picture and a certain suggestion of mystery in the shadows.

Do you understand?

But Bastien is doing, or is going to do, the burial of a young girl. Now, if he is intelligent, he will use for it such a landscape as I have imagined. I *hope* that he will not think of it, and that he will use a landscape of a vile green; and yet, I should be sorry if he did not make a sublime picture of the subject.

I want him to have the same ideas as myself, and yet I do not want him to. I can see his burial of a young girl in a flowery path, with fruit trees in blossom and budding rose bushes, and, in contrast, rough peasants' heads. All the poetry should rest in the coffin and in nature.

I will not say anything to him about it.

Sunday, May 20th.—Mamma arrived early Friday morning, and Saturday we received a dispatch saying that my father was in a deplorable state. To-day, his valet writes that his condition is desperate. He says, also, that he suffers greatly, and I am glad that mamma arrived in time.

To-morrow, they close the *Salon* for three days that the prizes may be awarded. It will be reopened on Thursday.

I dreamed that a coffin was placed upon my bed and I was told that there was a young girl lying in it. Through the darkness glowed a phosphorescent light.

Tuesday, May 22d.—I worked until half-past 7; but at every noise, every time the bell rang or Coco barked, my heart sank down into my boots.* How expressive that phrase is! We have the same in Russian. It is 9 o'clock in the

* *Mon âme s'en va dans les talons.*

Digitized by Google

evening, and no news yet. How many emotions I undergo! If I receive nothing, it will be outrageous. They are so very confident at the studio—Julian, Lefebvre, Tony, and all of them—that it seems impossible that I shall not be mentioned in some way. It is not kind of them at all; some one might have telegraphed me. One never can hear good news too soon.

Ah! if I had received anything, I should have heard of it before now.

I have a slight headache.

And my heart is beating, beating. Miserable life! This, and the rest, and everything, and all for what? To end in death!

Madame X—expired, after terrible suffering, in the midst of her sorrowing family. Monsieur Z— died suddenly at his residence in ——; nothing foretold so premature an end. Or again, Madame Y— was taken away from her loving relatives, at the age of ninety-nine.

And no one escapes! The end is the same for all.

To end! To end and be no more—that is the horror of it! If one only had enough genius to live forever—and I write stupid things with a trembling hand, because I have not yet heard the news of a miserable mention.

They just brought me a letter, and my heart almost stopped beating. It was from Doucet, to ask something about the waist of a gown.

I am going to take a little syrup of opium to calm my nerves. One would judge from my agitation that I had been thinking of my "Holy Women." The picture is all sketched in. When I work at it or think of it, I am in the same overwrought condition that I am this evening.

I can not occupy my mind with anything.

A quarter past 9. It can not be possible that the prudent Julian would have committed himself as he has done, if I had not been certain of a mention! And yet, what can this silence mean?

Digitized by Google

A flame seems to have enveloped all my body, and my cheeks are burning. I have had bad dreams when I felt just as I do now.

It is only twenty-five minutes past 9.

Julian ought to have come. He knew it about 6 o'clock, and he would have come to dinner, if he had had any good news for me. Then, I have received nothing.

I thought my picture would be refused, when there was no possibility of that being the case. But it is quite possible that I should receive no mention.

I have been watching the carriages pass by. Oh, it is too late now.

There is no medal of honor for painting. Dalou will have the one for sculpture.

What does that matter to me?

Would I have given Bastien the medal of honor? No! He can do better than that "Love in the Village," and consequently he does not deserve it. They might have given it to him for his sublime "Joan of Arc," the landscape of which I did not like three years ago.

I would like to see it again.

Thursday, May 24th.—I have received it! And I am reassured and tranquil once more, although I can not say happy.

I learned it through the newspapers. Those gentlemen did not take the trouble to write me a word.

I have considerable belief in the saying that "nothing ever happens exactly as one fears, or as one hopes."

I had been wondering what was going to happen. I should either have it, or I should not have it. In the latter case, I knew what the effect would have been upon me, because yesterday and the day before, I thought I was not going to get it. And in case I received it, I imagined exactly how I should feel. What has happened? What was the surprise in store for me? Well, in one sense I have won, and in another I have lost, beyond all hope.

Digitized by Google

At half-past 9 we went to the *Salon*. Just as we were leaving the house, we met Bojidar, who was beaming with delight, and who had brought his father to congratulate me. We took the young man with us. When we reached the room in which my picture was hung, I saw that its place had been changed, that it had been hung higher, above a large canvas representing tulips of a blinding color, and signed by a tenth-rate artist. It was probable, then, that *Honorable Mention* would be found attached to "Irma," and I hastened to see. But no, it was not.

I went finally to that odious pastel, and there I found the thing I was in search of.

I rushed off at once to find Julian, and I remained with him for more than half an hour, but I could not say much. I could easily have cried. Julian appeared very much astonished. He said that since the opening of the *Salon*, since my paintings had been seen, there was no longer any question of the pastel, and he was sure that my painting would be changed again, and placed upon the line.

In short, an honorable mention, even when granted to another department, ought to prevent one of my pictures being skyed in this way. Julian was very sympathetic, and he wrote pressing and persuasive dispatches to Cot, Lefebvre, and Tony Robert-Fleury. But I am afraid that it is too late for anything to be done.

A mention for the pastel is idiotic, but let that pass. The worst thing is to have my painting skyed. Tears of anger are falling from my eyes at this very moment.

I call God and all honest men to witness that last year they gave second-class medals to things which were far from being as good as my picture, and this year it is the same thing for that matter. Everybody will tell you that what I say is true. After all, it is nonsensical to be angry about it.

But I detest all this unfairness and wire-pulling. I can not understand this artistic-electoral mess. It is infamous! When

Digitized by Google

shall I be able to do the low things that the others do, and so have no cause for anger?

Of course, I would like to have what talent I possess speak for itself. But a beginner must be floated by influence. Bastien-Lepage, himself, was helped in the beginning by his teacher, Monsieur Cabanel. When a pupil shows any promise, his teacher ought to hold his head out of the water, so to speak, for a short time, and then, if he can keep himself afloat, it shows that he has some ability; if not, so much the worse for him. Oh, I shall reach the goal in time! But I am delayed, and it is not my fault. I am revolted at the injustice of it all.

Bojidar and Dina went to the board of management to demand justice for me, but of course without accomplishing anything. Bojidar stole the famous inscription, and brought me a bit of cardboard with the words: *Honorable Mention* printed upon it. I immediately tied it to Coco's tail, and the poor dog was so frightened that he did not dare to move. In short, I am vexed, miserable, unhappy! That skyed picture breaks my heart. But my despair furnished an amusing spectacle to those around me, for when I feel like crying I always say droll things. There is no use in annoying people; it is better to try to amuse them.

Friday, June 1st.—Those idiotic boys that are posing for me exasperate me to madness. I have the permission of their parents to punish them, and to-day I seized one of them and flung him on the floor as if he had been a package.

Well, what good did it do? Why, none at all.

Wednesday, June 6th.—My ears spoil everything for me. You will understand my sufferings when I tell you that the days I hear well are red-letter ones. Can you understand the horror of it?

And my nerves are excited to an absolutely extraordinary degree. My work suffers from it and I paint devoured by chimerical fears. I imagine all sorts of horrors; I fancy

Digitized by Google

myself subjected to every kind of infamy. I invent insults to myself, fearing all the time that they will become realities. I start in at my painting, and I begin to think of what may be said of me. I invent such horrors that I leap up and rush like a mad girl to the other end of the garden, uttering, meanwhile, indignant exclamations.

Ah! this will help me to produce a fine picture! I must try *douches* for my ears. And this evening I will write to mamma that she must come home or I shall go mad. I will write at once.

Sunday, June 10th.—As on Sunday there is no risk of meeting any one there, I went to the *Salon* this morning.

The distribution of prizes has really been abominably unjust.

There is always a crowd before young Rochegrosse's picture. It is certainly very powerful, but it does not cause me any emotion. But then what is there that does cause me any emotion?

To feel emotion I have to begin by simulating it, and then, by working hard, I manage to reach great excitement—fictitious, of course.

And yet "Joan of Arc" affected me. Yes, and a few other things besides.

Is there nothing at the Louvre I care for? I do not like the ancient machine-made pictures, but I adore the portraits and the delicious things of the French school.

And at the last exhibition of this century's portraits, I liked those of Lawrence, and two or three of Bastien's—his brother, André Theuriet, and Sarah Bernhardt.

And what else? Well, who tells you that I am both a great critic and a great painter?

By the exercise of will and intelligence, I should have done just as well in any other direction, except in that of mathematics.

But I have a passion for music, and I could easily compose. Then why have I taken up painting, and why should not I

Digitized by Google

devote myself to something else? Such thoughts make me miserable.

I want to make a great picture—great in size, I mean.

I have been seeking for a subject, and I have found a classical one—*Ulysses* relating his adventures to the King of the Phœacians, *Alcinoüs*. *Alcinoüs* and his queen are seated upon a throne, surrounded by princes, youths of both sexes and the members of their household. The scene is a sort of gallery with columns of rose-colored marble. *Nausicaa*, leaning against one of the columns, a little behind her parents, is listening to the hero. It is just after the festival and the song of the poet, *Demodocus*, who is in the foreground, and with his lute on his knees is gazing absently into the distance as if chagrined to be no longer listened to. I shall pay great attention to the attitudes and the groupings.

The conception of the picture will be good, but the hard thing will be to realize that conception.

I know nothing, nothing, nothing of furniture, costumes, or accessories. And then immense research is necessary to paint an enormous picture like this. I must learn what Tony Robert-Fleury calls—what does he call it?

Monday, June 11th.—My father is dead.

We received the dispatch at 10 o'clock; that is to say, a few minutes ago. My aunt and Dina both said that mamma ought to return at once without waiting for the funeral. I came up here to my own room, very much moved, but shedding no tears. But when Rosalie came to consult me about one of my gowns, I said to her: "It does not matter; Monsieur is dead," and I burst into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

Have I anything to reproach myself with concerning him? I think not. I have always tried to treat him properly. But in such a moment one always believes one's self to have been in some way to blame. I ought to have gone with mamma.

He was only fifty years old. He suffered so much, and he had never injured anyone. He was very much beloved by

Digitized by Google

his intimates; he was perfectly honorable, upright, an enemy to all trickery, and a very good fellow.

Wednesday, June 13th.—I think that if I should have the misfortune to lose mamma I should be filled with remorse, for I have been very rough and violent with her. My motives were good, I know; but all the same I should reproach myself for my extravagant words.

Besides, to lose mamma would be a terrible grief to me; the very thought of it brings the tears into my eyes. There is no use in taking any notice of her faults.

She is good and kind, but she does not understand anything, and she has no confidence in my opinions. She always thinks that everything will turn out all right, and that it is better "not to make a fuss."

I think that the death that would cause me the greatest sorrow would be that of my aunt, who has devoted all her life to the welfare of other people, and who has never lived for herself a single moment, unless, perhaps, the time spent at the *roulette* tables of Baden and Monaco.

Mamma is the only one who is kind to her; I have not kissed her for a month, and I say to her only indifferent things, or reproach her for all sorts of nonsensical occurrences. It is not because I wish to be disagreeable, but because I am so very unhappy, and all these discussions of our affairs with my family have accustomed me to speak in a short, sharp manner. If I should try to say tender or affectionate things I should burst into tears like a fool. But, without being affectionate, I could be more amiable, and smile and talk sometimes; that would make my aunt so happy, and would cost me nothing; but the change in my manner would be so marked that, through a feeling of false shame, I do not dare to attempt it.

And yet, I am very fond of that poor woman, whose life can be summed up in one word, "devotion;" and I would like to be kind to her. If she were to die, I should feel the most poignant remorse.

Digitized by Google

Take grandpapa, who made me impatient sometimes with his childish ways, but whose age should have commanded my respect. I often spoke crossly to him, and when he was paralyzed I felt so much remorse that I was with him, and waited upon him nearly all the time in order to expiate my offenses

And then grandpapa was very fond of me; and there! the very thought of him has made me cry.

Friday, June 15th.—The Canroberts have written me a charming letter, and, indeed, everyone has been full of sympathy.

This morning, hoping to meet no one I knew, I risked going to the Petit Hall, where there is an exhibition of 100 masterpieces for the benefit of some one or other. There are pictures by Decamps, Delacroix, Fortuny, Rembrandt, Rousseau, Millet, Meissonier (the only living one), and others. And, in the first place, I wish to make my apologies to Meissonier, of whom I knew little, and who had only inferior things at the last exhibition of portraits. Yes, his pictures are literally marvels.

But what had chiefly induced me to leave the seclusion my mourning imposed upon me was the desire to see Millet, of whom I knew nothing, and whose praises had been constantly dinned into my ears. "Bastien is only a weak imitator of him," they said. In short, I longed to see for myself. I looked at all his pictures, and I shall return to look at them again. Bastien imitates him, if you choose to have it so, because both paint peasants, both are great artists, and all real masterpieces have a family likeness.

Cazin's landscapes are much more like Millet's than Bastien's are. Millet's greatest merits, as far as I can judge from the six pictures I saw to-day, are the general effect, the harmonious arrangement, the atmosphere, and the transparency of his coloring. His figures are unimportant, treated in an off-hand manner, but broadly and naturally. And what makes Bastien unequaled to-day is the careful, spirited, and life-like

Digitized by Google

execution of his human figures; it is a perfect imitation of nature—in fact, life itself. His "Evening in the Village," which is only a small picture, is certainly equal to Millet; there are only two figures in it, half hidden in the twilight. But the memory of his "Love in the Village" irritates me. How faulty the background is! How can one help recognizing that fact? Yes, in his large pictures, he is lacking in that atmosphere and that harmonious arrangement which make Millet's small pictures so extraordinary. Whatever anyone may say, the figures should always be the chief thing of a picture.

"Père Jacques," in its general effect, is superior to "Love in the Village"; so is "Haymaking"; "Père Jacques" is full of poetry; the little girl picking flowers is a charming figure, and the old man is well done. I know that it is more difficult to give to a large picture that combination of delicacy and strength which is so characteristic of Millet, but no picture can be considered a great one if it does not possess it. In a small picture, many things may be suggested only. I speak of small pictures, where the general effect is chiefly considered (not the microscopic fidelity of Meissonier), like those of Cazin, for instance, who is Millet's disciple. In a small picture, that strange quality called charm, which is due to the general effect rather than to any particular detail, can be given with a few strokes of the pencil; while, in the case of a large picture, it becomes a very different thing, and it is exceedingly difficult to accomplish, for sentiment must rest on a basis of science, and these are often as difficult to combine as love and money.

Saturday, June 16th.—I refuse any longer to give to Bastien's pictures the title of masterpieces. Why so? Is it because I can not endure his "Love in the Village," or because I have not the courage of my opinions? A man must be dead before we dare to deify him; if Millet were living what would people say of him? And then we have only six of Millet's pictures here; can we not find six of equal merit in the Rue Legendre? "*Pas-Mèche*," 1; "Joan of Arc," 2; The

Digitized by Google

portrait of his brother, 3; "Evening in the Village," 4; "Haymaking," 5. I do not know all his pictures, and he is not dead yet. Bastien is not so much Millet's disciple as is Cazin, who resembles without equaling him. Bastien is original and himself. One always imitates some one in the beginning, but one's own personality soon asserts itself. And, moreover, poetry, strength, and charm are always the same; and, if to seek these is imitation, it is disheartening indeed. A picture by Millet impresses one deeply, and Bastien produces the same effect. What does that prove?

Shallow people will say it proves imitation, but they are wrong; two different actors can move us in the same way, because real, intense, human sentiments are always the same.

Etincelle devotes a dozen very pleasant lines to me. I am a remarkable painter, a beautiful young girl, and a pupil of Bastien-Lepage. What do you think of that?

I saw a bust of Ernest Renan at Saint-Marceaux's studio, and yesterday I saw Renan pass in a cab, and recognized him at once. So the likeness must be good, at least.

Monday, June 18th.—Attention! I have quite an important event to narrate. I granted an interview at 11 o'clock this morning to the correspondent of the *Nouveau Temps* (of St. Petersburg), who had written requesting it. It is a very important paper, and this Monsieur B— is sending to it, among other things, some studies upon the painters of Paris, and as "you occupy among them a notable place, you will permit me, I hope," etc.

Before going down-stairs, I left him alone for a few minutes with my aunt, that she might make my entrance more effective by telling him how young I was, and all sorts of things. He looked at all the pictures and took notes: When did I begin? Where? At what age and under what circumstances? Give me some details! etc. I am an artist whom the correspondent of a great journal is going to write an article about.

It is a beginning, and one that the mention has procured

Digitized by Google

for me. I only hope that the article will be a good one; I am not quite sure that the correspondent's notes were correct, for I did not hear all that was said, and then it was a very embarrassing position for me. It was my aunt and Dina who told him everything. I shall await the article with the greatest anxiety, and it will be a fortnight before it will appear.

They laid *special* weight upon my youth.

Thursday, June 21st.—To-morrow, the distribution of prizes takes place, and they have sent me a list which includes my name (section of painting). This is all very well, but I hesitate to go; it is not worth the trouble, and then—

What makes me afraid? I do not know.

Friday, June 22d.—Bojidar has been here since 9 o'clock. He is a very curious being. The principal trait of his fantastic, careless, Slav character is his love of improvisation. When he is a friend of any one, moreover, his imagination is used to glorify his friend, and he becomes passionately attached to people for a certain length of time.

Those poor artists! Among them were pale, sensitive men, of forty-five or so, with shabby, ill-made clothes, who went to receive their prizes and to shake the hand of the minister, Jules Ferry.

A good old sculptor, as soon as he received his little box, began to open it, with a happy smile, like that of a child.

I was a little nervous as I looked at all the people there, and I thought for a moment that it would be a frightful thing to rise and approach that table.

My aunt and Dina were seated behind me on a bench, for only those who were to receive prizes had a right to chairs.

Well, the day for the distribution of prizes is over, and it was not at all that I thought it would be.

Oh, if I only receive a medal next year, and realize my dreams at last! To be applauded, to triumph!

That would be too beautiful, but I am so unlucky; and if I should receive a second medal, I should doubtless desire a first.

Digitized by Google

And then the cross? Why not? And after that? Well, after that, I should like to enjoy the fruit of my labor, work constantly, so as not to retrograde, and try to be happy and love some one.

We shall see. There is plenty of time. I shall be no uglier, nor look any older five years from now than I do to-day. And if I should marry now, I might regret it, perhaps. But I must marry. I am twenty-two years old, and people think me older, not that I look very aged; but when I was thirteen at Nice, they took me for seventeen, and I appeared so.

In short, I must marry some one who *truly loves me*; otherwise, I should be the most unhappy of women. But it would have to be also some one who was a suitable match for me.

If I were celebrated, illustrious, that would settle everything. No; I must not count upon meeting an ideal being, who will respect and love me, and who is at the same time a good match. Famous women frighten ordinary men, and geniuses are rare.

Sunday, June 24th.—I have been thinking of the silly things I wrote to Pietro. For instance, when I said that I thought of him every evening, that I was constantly longing for him, and that if he should come to Nice unexpectedly, I would throw myself into his arms. And people thought I was in love with him; my readers will believe it.

But never, never, never was this the case—no, never!

But often, on a summer evening, when one is bored and weary, one longs to cast one's self into the arms of a lover. I have had such longings a hundred times; and then I had a name to write, a real being, whom I could call Pietro. Bah! Pietro, indeed!

I had a fancy to become the niece of a great Cardinal, who might some day be Pope, but there was nothing beyond that.

No; I have never been in love, and now I never shall be. A man must be very superior to please me, now that I have

Digitized by Google

become so exacting. It would never be possible for me to fall in love with some young fellow simply because his appearance and manners were attractive.

Thursday, June 28th.—It seems to me, at times, that this interminable journal contains treasures of original thoughts and sentiments. For years, my journal has been a sort of store-house, and I keep always a sheet or two of paper with me to take notes for it. It is as much a part of my existence as is breathing. I must either win peace by marrying, or by devoting myself entirely to work.

Tuesday, July 3d.—The picture does not progress, and I am in despair. I have no consolation, whatever.

At last I have received the *Nouveau Temps*, containing the article on the artists of Paris. It is very good, but it causes me some embarrassment, because it says that I am only nineteen, when I am older, and pass for even older than I am.

But it will produce a great effect in Russia.

Thursday, July 12th.—The Canroberts came to breakfast, and then we went to the exhibition in the Rue de Sèze. What I want is to have talent. It seems to me as if there were nothing in the world worth having except that.

Dressing and flirting amount to nothing. I pay considerable attention to my personal appearance, because that is a form of art, and I could not be dowdy.

This constant worry is making me ugly. I live the most secluded and solitary life, and what good will it do me?

It is fine to tell of trials and privations after one's genius has been recognized. But meanwhile? I do not think it was anything so wonderful for Benvenuto Cellini to burn the work of his hands. I cast into the flames something finer and more costly than that. And what will be the result? He knew what it would be; but I?

If I could get done with that picture of the street boys, I would go into the country, into the real country with broad horizons, and grassy fields, and no hills; where there would be

Digitized by Google

beautiful sunsets, meadows, bushes, roses, wild flowers, and space—space! and I would paint a large picture, with a broad expanse of sky, bushes, and wild flowers.

Friday, July 13th.—Am I romantic in the ridiculous sense of the word? or am I really superior to the ordinary run of people, for my sentiments are in accord only with what is most elevated and purest in literature; and Balzac acknowledges that writers, as a rule, are guilty of over-ornamentation.

And what of love?

What is love? I have never felt it; for those passing fancies, inspired by vanity, can not be regarded as love. I have shown preferences for certain persons, because my imagination needed an object to weave its fancies about, and these people were preferred by me because it was a necessity of my "great soul," and not because of their own good qualities. That is all the difference, and it is an enormous one.

Let us turn abruptly to another subject—art. I can not tell how I am getting on with my painting. I copy Bastien-Lepage, and that is deplorable. A copyist can never equal the original.

One can never be great until one has discovered a new and original means to render one's own impressions.

I have no art.

I can see something of originality, however, in my "Holy Women." And in anything else? In sculpture it is different; but in painting!

In the "Holy Women" I imitate no one, and I think I shall make it very effective; for I am trying to put great sincerity into the mere execution of the picture, and also to express all the emotion with which the subject inspires me.

The picture of the boys makes me think of Bastien-Lepage, although I have taken the subject from the streets, and it is a very common-place, every-day one. But then, the fear that I am imitating that painter is always a worry to me.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, July 14th.—We took a drive to see the decorations, and I was very much entertained.

I will continue my subject of yesterday.

Have you read Stendhal's "Love"?

I am reading it now.

I have never been in love in my life, or else I have never ceased to be in love with an imaginary being. Let us see which it is.

Read this book. It is even more delicate than Balzac—more true, more harmonious, more poetical.

And it expresses exquisitely what all the world has felt, even I. But I have always been too much given to self-analysis.

I have never been really in love, except at Nice, when I was an ignorant child.

And then I had a sickly fancy for that horror of a Pietro.

I can remember really delicious moments at Naples, when I was alone on the balcony in the evening listening to a serenade; when I felt transported and was in a sort of ecstasy, with no other reason than was to be found in the place, the hour, and the music.

I have never had such sensations in Paris, nor anywhere else except in Italy.

If I did not fear the gossip it would cause, I would get married at once; I should be free and peaceful while awaiting the coming of *the* one. But, on the other hand, to marry an average man, who, irreproachable as he might be, would render me unhappy or would bore me to death!

Monday, July 16th.—Crystallization interests me extremely, and I am convinced that there is yet a book to be written upon those innocent crystallizations, which really never amount to anything.

Take myself, for instance, with whom *complete* love would be possible only in marriage, or some other right-minded young girl, or even a married woman of good principles—we

Digitized by Google

are not exempt from the shocks which cause crystallizations; but these crystallizations have no results, and permit me to say here that I do not like the word crystallization; but by the use of it you can avoid, as Stendhal says, a long explanatory sentence, and therefore I employ it. Crystallization commences. If the "object" possesses all perfection imaginable, we are impelled gently forward and we reach love; the essential thing is to love, and not to practice the thing which Monsieur Alexandre Dumas, the younger, calls *love*. If the "object" is not perfect, if we discover a fault, be it ugliness, a ridiculous peculiarity, a lack of intelligence, or anything, the thing stops half-way. I believe, also, that the progress of love can be arrested by an effort of will.

Tuesday, July 17th.—I am still full of thoughts of crystallizations, which, alas! have no object.

My painting is improving a little. Oh, to have genius! To efface that miserable mention! To exhibit the picture of the boys; and the "Holy Women" in an entirely black frame, and below, the text: "And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre and departed; and there was Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre." And a statue, "Nausicaa" or "Ariadne;" the casts are all made and "Ariadne" would create a sensation. They would say that it was I, myself, abandoned by—whom? And "Nausicaa?" I love them both.

There are three things (two pictures and a statue) that I desire so strongly to do that I have become really superstitious about the matter.

Love can not absorb me completely; it will be a charming accessory, the crowning of the edifice. Well, we shall see.

Sunday, July 22d.—I had a burning pain last night in my right side, at the place where the lung is affected. I have decided at last to submit to a yellow stain for three or four months, for I do not want to die of consumption.

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, July 25th.—Monsieur X— brought us the two busts, which we had purchased for 100 francs apiece. We kept him to dinner.

He seemed very ill-at-ease, although he affected an air of composure; I felt for him, imagining that he must be longing to get away. They say that he is poor; that thought pained me, and made me ashamed that I had paid for two works of art only about as much as a new hat would have cost. Instead of making me more amiable, all this gave my manners a seeming lack of cordiality, and I was angry at myself for it. The poor fellow brought his overcoat into the *salon* and placed it upon the divan. He scarcely uttered a word; we had a little music, and that produced a certain diversion; he must have suffered terribly from timidity. I can not see that he has much brains, yet, with his talents, he must be intelligent; but we did not know how to put him at his ease; besides, his is a wild sort of nature; he must be very proud and very unhappy. At all events, it is certain that he is poor and that I bought two busts of him for 200 francs. It makes me ashamed. I should like to send him 100 francs more; for I have 150 francs in my purse, but I don't know how.

Thursday, July 26th.—The weather is so uncertain that I have been forced to stop work on my picture, and I destroyed all my groups in clay except one, which is not yet entirely finished; and then, of course, Saint-Marceaux came to call.

What heart-beatings, crystallization, etc.! I put on, took off, and put on again two or three dresses, made him wait a long time, and, finally, went down to see him, badly dressed and very red.

He is very amusing, with his indignation against the modern school and the disciples of realism. He says one must seek a certain something, which is art, and which can not be explained in words.

I understand what he means, but— He saw only that paltry group, and, from that he told me to continue. It is disconcert-

Digitized by Google

ing; the reclining man, of which C— advised me to have a cast made in order to preserve it, was in the hands of the workmen, and so Saint-Marceaux did not see it. I have had no compliments except for that everlasting portrait of Dina, which everybody thinks so good. Saint-Marceaux is charming, original, clever, and very nervous; he does not hesitate to criticise everything, which is better than that hypocrisy which praises everything and everybody. He saw my picture of the street boys, and said that it was easy to paint ordinary, common-place things—peasants and such things—but the difficult thing was to paint beautiful, delicate things, full of character.

"And, above all, strive to put in your pictures a certain nameless something which can not be taught, which we find only in ourselves, and which, in short, is art."

Have I not said that? Down with the vile copyists, the photographers, the naturalists!

But I can not help a feeling of pain that I was neither bright, nor pretty, nor witty during Saint-Marceaux's call.

Friday, August 3d.—Bastien-Lepage is enough to drive one wild. When you study nature closely, when you wish to imitate perfectly, it is impossible not to think all the time of that great artist.

He possesses all the secrets of flesh-tints. What others make is painting; his works are nature itself. We hear much about the realists; but the realists do not know what reality is; they coarsen everything, and think they are representing the truth. Realism does not consist in the reproduction of a vulgar thing, but in executing the thing in the most perfect manner possible. I do not wish what I do to be painting; I want it to be flesh and alive.

When one has worked like a dog all day long, it is hard to realize that one's work has been of no avail, and only a dry and worthless thing has been produced.

And the memory of that monster of Damvillers paralyzes

Digitized by Google

me. The picture is broad, simple, true, and all the details of nature are there. Ah, misery!

Sunday, August 5th.—They say that I have had a love affair with C—, and that that is the reason I do not marry; for otherwise people can not understand why, as I have a fine dowry, I have not yet become a countess or a marquise.

The fools! Fortunately, you handful of the upper crust, superior beings, you dearly beloved friends who are reading these pages, now know how correct your conjectures were. But when the time comes for you to read me, all those of whom I speak will probably be dead, and C— will carry to the tomb the sweet conviction that he was loved by a young and beautiful foreigner, who, captivated by his graces, etc. The idiot! And others will also believe it. The idiots! But you know well that it is not so. It would be poetical, perhaps, to refuse little marquises for love's sweet sake; but, alas! I refuse them through plain common sense.

Tuesday, August 7th.—The blood rushed to my face as I thought that, in a week, it will be five months since I finished my *Salon* picture. What have I done in five months? Nothing yet. To be sure, I have accomplished something in sculpture; but that does not count. The "Street Boys" is not finished.

I am very unhappy—seriously unhappy. N. N— dined here, and he retailed to me his catalogue of the Museum of the Louvre, speaking of the position of almost every picture. He had learned it by heart to conquer my good graces. He believes that he can do so, and that there is a possibility of my marrying him. To have such an opinion, he must believe that I am at my wits' ends for a husband. Is it, perhaps, because he thinks my beauty is fading?

After his departure, I nearly fainted away with grief and indignation. What have I done to God that He should strike me blow after blow in this way? What does that modern Potiphar believe? If he is not convinced that I shall never

Digitized by Google

love anything but art, what does he think? And yet a marriage of love is out of the question, it seems.

Then what is it that makes me cross and impatient? What makes my every-day life so miserable? It is a strong force within me, something that there are no words in my scanty vocabulary to express.

The idea of a picture or a statue will keep me awake night after night; the thought of a handsome man has never had that effect.

I have been to the Louvre this morning to look at Raphael's pictures, in consequence of something I read in Stendhal. Well, do what I may, from what I saw there, I can not like him. I like better the ingenuous effects of the earliest painters.

Raphael is paltry and false.

Divine, divine, you say. Divine—is he divine? Anything divine should carry us out of ourselves and transport our thoughts to celestial regions.

Raphael wearies me.

Who, then, is divine? I do not know. Why does Stendhal say that Raphael paints souls? In which of his pictures?

That is an admiration which I can not attain to. No, I prefer the early artists, simple and wonderful men, among whom is the great Perugino. But what do I care for those enormous, absurd canvases, full of *technique* and knowledge, or even Rubens' masses of flesh? They bore me! What do I say to Raphael's Madonnas, or "The Marriage in Cana?" Why, there is nothing divine about them. His Madonnas are ordinary—and his children! Well, I must see again his pictures that are in Italy. The memory that I have of them is not pleasant. The "Madonna della Sedia" is a pretty, delicate woman of the Italian type. I see more divinity in Michael Angelo's. *Raphael Sanzio.* Listen to that high-sounding name!

I would like to paint only things which move one, make the pulses throb, or set one dreaming—something which touches

Digitized by Google

the heart like the simple little pictures of Cazin; the size matters little, but if one could achieve that effect in a large picture it would be superb. But how many are there who appreciate Cazin?

Saturday, August 11th.—I have been reading Stendhal's history of painting, and the intelligent man thinks exactly as I do. Yet it seems to me that he strives too hard to be sarcastic and original.

I felt a painful surprise when I read his opinion that, to paint grief, one ought to be well-posted in physiology.

Why?

If I do not *feel* the sentiment, how can physiology teach me to do so? The muscles! Oh, Lord! A painter who attempts to depict grief physiologically, without having seen it, understood it, felt it (literally), will never be anything but a cold, dry artist. It is as if one should advise some one in trouble to grieve according to certain rules.

Feel first, and then, if you wish, use your reason. Analysis can do nothing but confirm the first impression. The study would simply be one of pure curiosity.

You can analyze the component parts of tears, if you like, to learn logically and scientifically what color they should be painted. But I prefer to paint them as I see them, without even knowing why they are what they are, and not something else.

Sunday, August 12th.—The idea that Bastien-Lepage was to come, unnerved me to such a degree that I could do nothing. It is really ridiculous to be so impressionable.

The Pope dined with us! We talked all through dinner. Bastien-Lepage is exceedingly intelligent, but less brilliant than Saint-Marceaux. I did not show him any of my paintings—not one, not one, not one! I said nothing; that is to say, I was not brilliant, and when he began an interesting conversation, I did not know how to answer him, nor could I even follow his crisp, bright sentences which were so like his

Digitized by Google

paintings. If it had been Julian, I should have answered him, for that is the sort of conversation that suits me best. He is intelligent, he understands everything, he is even learned, and I feared to display any ignorance.

When he said things to which I should have responded in a manner to display the best qualities of my mind and heart, I was stupidly silent.

I can not even write; I am completely disorganized to-day.

I long to remain alone—all alone by myself, to think about the powerful impression this man has made upon me. Ten minutes after he arrived, I had mentally capitulated and accepted his influence over me.

I said nothing that I ought to have said. He is a demi-god, and he knows it. I have even strengthened him in that belief. To ordinary eyes, he is small and ugly; but, to me and people of my stamp, his face is charming. What does he think of me? I was awkward and I laughed too much. He said he was jealous of Saint-Marceaux. A fine triumph for me!

Thursday, August 16th.—To say that I had met with a great misfortune would, perhaps, be an exaggeration; but what has happened can really be considered, even by the most sensible people, as a heavy blow.

It is stupid, too, as all misfortunes are.

I was going to send my picture to the Triennial the 20th of August, the last day of grace; and it is not the 20th, but to-day, the 16th, which is the last day of grace.

My nostrils dilate, I have pains in my back, and my hands tremble as though I had the palsy.

After having been beaten, one must feel as I do.

I went and hid in the bath-room to weep out my misery; it was not a very romantic spot, but it was the only place where I would not be interrupted.

If I had shut myself up in my room, they would guess why I had done so after having received such a blow. It is, I think, the first time that I have hidden myself to cry, with

Digitized by Google

my eyes closed and my mouth twisted up like a child or a clown. And after that? Well, after that, I went to my study and remained there until my eyes had lost their redness.

Once, some time ago, I wept in mamma's arms; and this grief, shared, so to speak, was such a cruel humiliation to me for months afterward, that I will never again weep for a personal misfortune before anyone. One can shed tears in the presence of anyone, no matter who, from anger or for the death of Gambetta, for instance; but to parade one's weakness, poverty of spirit, misery, humiliation—never! It may be a consolation for the time being, but you will repent it ever afterward.

While weeping in the bath-room, I found the expression I want for my Magdalen, who can not look at the sepulchre, and who stares fixedly before her, as I did at that moment. I must paint her with her eyes wide open, just after having wept bitterly.

God is unjust, and if He does not exist, to whom can I appeal? He punishes me for having doubted Him. He does everything to make me doubt Him, and then, when I do doubt Him, He strikes me over the head; and when I persist in believing in Him and praying to Him, He strikes me harder still, to teach me patience.

Friday, August 17th.—People do not believe in my timidity; it is due, however, to an excess of pride.

I have a horror and a terror of asking anything; it must be offered to me. If, after I have worked myself up to the proper degree of courage, I determine to ask for something, I never get what I want; it is almost always too late.

I turn white and red twenty times before I dare to say that I intend to paint or exhibit a picture; it seems to me that people are laughing at me; that I don't know anything, that I am pretentious and ridiculous.

When anyone looks at a picture of mine (*anyone* means an artist, of course), I retire as far away as I can, I am so afraid

Digitized by Google

of an adverse word or look. However, Robert-Fleury does not suspect that I have so little confidence in myself. As I speak in a boasting sort of way, he thinks that I have a high opinion of myself, and believe myself to have great talent. Consequently, he thinks that there is no need of encouraging me, and if I should tell him my doubts and hesitations he would laugh at me. I spoke to him on the subject once, and he took it as a joke. That is a great error into which I have fallen. Bastien-Lepage knows, I think, that I am frightfully afraid of him, and he believes himself to be a god.

Monday, August 20th.—I have been singing; it is a beautiful night, and the moonlight streams in through the large window of the studio. One ought to be able to be happy. Yes, if one had the luck to fall in love. In love with whom?

Tuesday, August 21st.—No, I shall not die until I am forty years old, like Mademoiselle Colignon. When I am about thirty-five I shall be very ill, and at thirty-six or seven I shall spend a winter in bed. And my last wishes? I shall simply ask a statue and a portrait from Saint-Marceaux and Jules Bastien-Lepage, to be placed in a prominent place in some chapel of Paris, surrounded by flowers; and, forever, at each anniversary of my death, masses by Verdi and Pergolese, and other music shall be sung by the most celebrated singers.

And then I will found a prize for artists, both male and female.

Instead of thinking about that, however, I want to live. But I have no genius, and it is much better to die.

Monday, August 27th.—I have given my picture of the angler to the Ischia lottery; tickets are for sale at Petit's in the Rue de Sèze. My angler is good, and the water is well painted, they say. I would never have believed it. We are all fools. What is the use of doing artistic work? The multitude will never appreciate it. Do you care for what the multitude thinks of you? Yes; that is, I should like to have

Digitized by Google

everybody familiar with my name, in order that I might have the more admiration.

Wednesday, August 29th.—I cough all the time, in spite of the warm weather; and this afternoon, while the model was resting, I laid down on the divan and had a vision of myself stretched out with a tall, lighted candle beside me.

That will be the end of all my troubles.

Death? I am terribly afraid of it.

And I don't want to die. It would be frightful. I don't know how happy people feel, but I am right to complain, since I have nothing more to expect of God. When that supreme refuge fails, one has nothing to do but to die. Without God there can be no poetry, no affection, no genius, no love, no ambition.

The passions cause us doubts, aspirations, desires, furious thoughts. We need a Being above all this—a God to Whom we can tell our enthusiasms and address our prayers; a God Who is all powerful, and of Whom we can ask anything, to Whom we can disclose our most secret thoughts. I should like to have all remarkable men confess the truth, and say if, when they have been very much in love, very ambitious, or very unhappy, they have not had recourse to God.

Vulgar natures, however intelligent and learned they may be, can dispense with Him; but those who have the *spark*, even if they are learned in all sciences, even if their *reason* bids them doubt, such people are possessed, at least at times, by a passionate belief.

I am not very learned, but all my reflections lead to this conclusion: The God that we are taught to believe in is an invention. Let us speak no more of the God of religion, or religions, rather.

But the God of men of genius, the God of philosophers, the God of people who are possessed of more than average intelligence, like you and I—that God is unjust if He does not

Digitized by Google

listen to us; or, if He is a wicked God, I don't see what business He has to exist.

But if He does not exist, why has there been this universal craving for something to adore, among all nations and in all ages? Is it possible that there is *nothing* which can answer to these aspirations, which are inborn in all men; to this instinct which leads us to seek the Supreme Being, the great Master, God?

Saturday, September 8th.—This has been a good day. I have finished the portrait of Louis. We went to Versailles, and in the evening, after a call on the Maréchale, Claire and I threw ourselves down on the floor in the *salon*, as we do every evening. We talked about art, as we also do every evening; but to-night there was more real intimacy than usual, and it is at such times especially that I think of my picture. It shall be something full of poetry—calm, simple, broad.

You see my aspirations are not so lofty but that they may well be realized. Well, we shall see.

My new picture should be grand and simple.

Thursday, September 13th.—I read in "Stendhal" that our sorrows appear less bitter when we idealize them. This is exceedingly true. But how can I idealize mine? It is impossible! They are so bitter, so miserable, so frightful, that I can not speak of them even in these pages without wounding myself horribly. How can I say that at times I don't hear well? Well, may the will of God be done! This phrase comes to me mechanically, and I almost believe it; for I am going to die quite naturally in my bed without violence.

I am reconciled, for I am uneasy about my eyes. I did not work or read for a fortnight, and they were no better. I have palpitations, and see floating specks in the air.

It is, perhaps, because for the last two weeks I had had bronchitis, which would keep in bed any one else in the world, and yet I walk about as if nothing were the matter with me.

Digitized by Google

I have been working on Dina's portrait, but with spirits so depressed that it will probably give me more white hairs.

Saturday, September 15th.—This morning I went to the *Salon* to see Bastien's pictures. What can I say? He is the jewel of jewels. There are three portraits, which, to use the words of Julian, who dined with us to-night, are enough to drive one wild. Never has anything like them been done before. They are alive; they have souls. In execution there is nothing which can be compared to them, for they are nature itself. It is foolish to attempt to paint after seeing the products of his brush.

He has a little picture entitled "Ripe Wheat." It represents a man mowing with his back toward the spectator. It is an excellent picture.

Then there are two life-size paintings—"Haymaking" and "The Potato Diggers."

What color! what drawing! what execution! There is the wealth of tones which is to be found only in nature itself. And the figures live!

The coloring enchants you with its divine simplicity, and you gaze at the canvas in pure delight.

I entered the room without knowing what was there, and I stopped short as my eyes rested upon "Haymaking," as one would stop at the unexpected sight of a lovely landscape through an open window.

I can do no justice to the beauty of this picture. Bastien-Lepage is a hundred leagues above anyone else. No one can be compared to him.

I am really ill, and I have applied an enormous blister to my chest. After that, doubt my courage and my desire to live, if you like. No one knows it except Rosalie; I walk about the studio, read, laugh and sing with something of my old beauty of voice. As I often do nothing on Sundays, it astonishes no one that I am idle to-day.

Digitized by Google

Tuesday, September 18th.—It appears that the interest the Russian press has shown in me has inspired a certain interest in everybody else, and among others in the Grand Duchess Catharine. Mamma is very intimate with her grand chamberlain and his family, and they have spoken seriously of my being appointed to the post of lady of honor. But I must be presented to the Grand Duchess first. The subject was much talked about; but mamma was wrong to return here, and let the matter progress without her.

And then—my lofty soul demands a sister soul—I shall never have a woman friend. Claire says that I can never have a girl friend, because I have none of the little secrets and stories that a young girl usually has.

"You are too good; you have nothing to hide."

Wednesday, September 26th.—Now that the vexations are forgotten, I recall that my father had something good, original, and witty about him. He was thoughtless, and seemed frivolous and rude to many people. He was a little cold and tricky, perhaps; but who is without his faults? Have I myself none? I blame myself for my treatment of him, and it brings the tears to my eyes.

Perhaps I should have gone to him. It would have been through a sense of what was proper, for I had no feeling about the matter.

But would it have been a meritorious action? I think not.

I had no feeling, and God will punish me for it; but is it my fault? And then, will the more softened sentiments I feel this evening be charged up to my credit?

Are we responsible for the good or bad sentiments we *really* feel?

One should do one's duty, you reply. It was not a question of duty. We were speaking of sentiments, and as I did not feel the necessity of going, how would God judge me?

Yes, I regret that I did not feel the tenderness I do this evening. He is dead, and it is too late to repair my mistake.

Digitized by Google

What would it have cost me to go and do my duty, for it *was* my duty to go to my dying father. I did not understand it at the time, but yet I do not feel wholly blameless; I did not do my duty, and I should have done it. I shall regret it forever. Yes, I did not do right, and I regret it; I am ashamed of myself, which is very painful for me to bear. I am not trying to excuse myself; but do you not think that mamma should have told me what to do? Well, yes, I know she was afraid of overtaxing my strength, and then the family reasoned in this way: "If Marie is with her mother, they will remain there six months; but if Marie remains here, her mother will return more quickly."

Alas! there is always some secret influence at work, of which one knows nothing.

Monday, October 1st.—The body of our great writer, Tourgueneff, who died a fortnight ago, was sent to Russia to-day. There was a grand ceremony of farewells at the station. There were speeches by Monsieur Renan, Monsieur About and Vyrouboff, a Russian who spoke French very well, and who moved me more than the others. About spoke very low, and I could scarcely hear him; but Renan, whom I recognized from Saint-Marceaux's bust, was excellent, and the last farewell was very powerful. Bogoliouboff also pronounced a eulogy. In short, I was proud to see a Russian honored by those horribly haughty Frenchmen.

I love them, but I despise them.

They let Napoleon die at Saint Helena. That was monstrous—an abominable crime, an eternal shame to France!

Rome, however, assassinated Cæsar.

And the French maltreated Lamartine, who, in antiquity, would have had altars raised to him, as Dumas the younger so justly remarks.

And then I have another grudge against them, which is more personal: They have never recognized the genius of Bastien-Lepage.

Digitized by Google

After the Tourgueneff ceremonials, we went to the *Salon*, and I can not see Bastien's pictures without my heart beating with enthusiasm—concealed of course; for if I should give voice to my enthusiasm, people would think I was in love with him.

Meissonier! But Meissonier is only a cunning trickster. He makes microscopic things in a way to astonish you so much that it almost amounts to emotion. But when he attempts to do anything else—when his heads are more than a third of an inch long—he becomes harsh and ordinary; but people do not dare to say it and everybody admires him, although all his *Salon* pictures are simply fair and correct in their execution.

But is this art? People, admirably dressed, playing on the piano or riding horseback? Why, there are many *genre* painters who can do as well.

The finest and most wonderful thing of his that I have seen is the "Ball Players," upon the highway of Antibes. It is a scene from real life, although the costumes are antique; it is full of air and sunlight, and it is so small and so wonderfully painted that it is simply astounding.

The picture of himself and his father on horseback is also fine; and so is "The Engraver." The expression and pose are strong and true—this thinker and worker touches us and interests us, and the details are miraculous. There is also a picture of his of a cavalier of Louis XIII.'s time, looking out of a window; it is the same size as "The Engraver," and this is also human, natural, simple—a bit of life, in short.

As far as his other pictures go, I class them in the ranks of good, careful, *genre* paintings; and, if it were not for the masterpieces I have cited, Meissonier would never have attained the celebrity he has.

His portraits, when the head is only two-thirds of an inch long, are not bad; but, the larger they are, the worse they are.

Digitized by Google

I salute him and pass on; he will never move me to enthusiasm. But look at the portraits of Bastien-Lepage! The majority of people would cry out in deprecation, if I should say that they are infinitely better than Meissonier's; and yet it is an incontestable fact.

But all envious people use old, recognized genius as a battering ram to knock down those who seem dangerous to them. Nothing can be compared to the portraits of Bastien-Lepage. Deny the merit of his pictures, if you choose—you can not understand them; but his portraits! From the beginning of the world up to the present time, no one has done anything better.

Saturday, October 6th.—That excellent, that good, that kind Robert-Fleury has been to see my picture. Excellent, good, and kind! You see from this, of course, that he did not scold me. His first words were, "That looks very well."

I interrupted him at once.

"No, Monsieur, I beg of you, do not flatter me. I do not wish it. That horrible Julian says that people flatter me; that I know nothing; that—"

"But I ask your pardon, Mademoiselle; I have always treated you as an earnest pupil—as one who was entirely serious in her work."

"Monsieur Julian says that I know nothing; that—"

"And you allow him to tease you?"

And the charming man laughed aloud at my guilelessness.

Well, this is what he said of the picture: "It is very good; there are parts of it that are exceedingly good" (I use his very words); parts that are, perhaps, as good as anything I shall ever do. The boy on the right and the one in the foreground with his back turned are capital. But the background needs to be lightened up on the right, and that will improve the picture enormously; my figures I must not touch, except to make two eyes a little less black.

That will be a work of two hours.

Digitized by Google

I ought to be mad with joy, but I am not, because I do not share the opinion of my excellent master. I can do better. Do I mean that what I have done is not good? Well, not good enough. I can imagine something better, and I ought to be able to realize my conception.

What will the public say? Is it a picture that will be talked about? How can I tell? Tony thinks that it is good. "Do not send it to Nice; keep it for Paris." He says that it is good; but if he means relatively good, I do not care for his praise. It is good for someone else; but for me, for all the world? Is it strong? He thinks the drawing of the boy with his back turned is perfect. "You can feel," he says, "that he has legs in his trousers."

He believes, perhaps, that I thought of the anatomical nonsense.

I copied nature without thinking of anything else; besides, it seems to me that talent is unconscious.

Saturday, October 6th.—I have been reading a novel by our illustrious Tourgueneff, in French, to learn the impression he makes upon foreigners.

He was a great writer, a very subtle genius, and a very clear analyst; a poet, a Bastien-Lepage. His descriptions of scenery are beautiful, and he depicts the most delicate shades of sentiment as Bastien-Lepage paints them.

What a sublime artist!

Millet! Well, he is as poetical as Millet; I use this unfit comparison for the benefit of the imbeciles who would not otherwise understand me.

All that is grand, poetical, beautiful, subtle, true in music or literature leads my thoughts to that marvelous painter, that poet, Bastien-Lepage. He takes subjects which would be considered vulgar by men and women of the world, and draws from them the deepest poetry.

What more ordinary than a little girl watching a cow or a woman working in the fields?

Digitized by Google

Those subjects have been done before, you say.

Well, but no one has done them as he has; he tells a story 300 pages long on one bit of canvas. But there are, perhaps, only a dozen or so of us who understand him.

Tourgueneff, also, depicted peasants—the poor Russian peasants—and with what truth, what frankness, what sincerity!

It is touching, poetical, grand.

Unfortunately, abroad that can not be understood, and it is his studies of society by which he is best known.

Tuesday, October 9th.—Bojidar's portrait seems to me to be good; Julian says that it will, perhaps, be a great success; that it is quite new and original, and will appear like a skilled Manet.

This seems amusing to me. He is leaning on the balcony, showing a front view of his body and his head in profile outlined against the sky; you can see the docks, the houses, the roofs, the street, and a cab; it is a correct copy of it all, but I would like something more. The figure is very correct, even for me.

There are nasturtiums on the balcony. He is crumpling one of them in his fingers, as he looks out into the street; but I shall replace the flower with a cigarette; the other hand is in his pocket. It is life-size, half-length. There is a hand still to be done.

About half-past 5, I caught an effect of the crescent moon in the sky still red from the sunset—exactly, exactly, exactly what I want for my "Holy Women." I made a hasty sketch at once; I shall have to paint parts of that picture from memory and intuition; it is impossible to obtain sittings, so to speak, from such a sky as that; I am very anxious to commence it at once; I can do it *now* in three weeks. Let me see. The weather will be no worse at Concarneau in November than in October, and then— One ought to do what one wants to do, and at the proper psychological moment.

I have my sky, and I shall go to the South for the ground and the foliage. I have the model here. I must go to the South —but when? Let me see. When I have made the figures and

Digitized by Google

the sky—in two weeks, and, once there, perhaps I shall find some subjects for pictures, for I am not over-confident about the "Holy Women." It may succeed at once, and it may drag along for seven years.

But that sky—oh, if it were to be a small picture! But no, I want it life-size; it will be more striking.

Must I wait longer? Perhaps, for I have done well to wait as long as I have. A few months ago, if I had tried it, the execution would have been botched; I wanted to paint it by piecemeal, and I did not understand sufficiently the blending that should be given to it. And then I should like to be known first and send this picture under a well-known name, so that there would be no risk about its being accepted. Who can I consult? Who will be frank? Who will be true?

You, you, my only friend! You will be frank at all events, and you love me. Yes, I love myself, myself alone!

Yes, I must finish the boys, have another picture to send with it, exhibit Bojidar in a winter exposition at the club and a portrait of Dina also.

And I must have a statue. That is my dream, a dream possible of realization.

Monday, October 15th.—We went to the *Salon*—the Gavinis, mamma, and I. Monsieur Gavini at last agreed with me to-day that the portraits of Bastien-Lepage are superior to those of Meissonier. It cost me six months' of discussion, but I am very well satisfied with the result.

What do I care for the opinion of a man of the world upon painting? It is a little private triumph, and one loves to have one's ideas prevail. With the apostles this feeling became a passion, and that is still the case in some quarters; and when one is young one is full of fire; one wants to have one's enthusiasms shared. Some day, I shall snap my fingers at all that, as I do already at certain things.

And Bastien-Lepage will win over by it society people, who do not care much for him just now. I should like to be kind

Digitized by Google

and useful to everybody, to play the part of Providence, to help people, to make them happy; and even, oh, wonder of wonders! without greatly desiring to be known in the matter. Why, I am an angel!

Monday, October 22d.—I wish my consumption was imaginary.

It seems that there was a time when it was fashionable to be consumptive and people forced themselves to appear so, and believed that they were. Ah, if this were only imagination! I want to live, in spite of everything. I have no love troubles, no sentimental feeling—nothing of the sort! I should like to be celebrated and enjoy what good there is on this earth—my wants are so simple!

Sunday, October 28th.—I am wild that I have no pictures in preparation, and I say to myself: "Go to Fontainebleau," and then—"Why do that?" I could find quite near here a wooded place where I could go every morning in a cab, or why not paint the fog on the Seine? Or—well, in fact, I don't see anything clearly, and I don't know what I want.

And why not go to Arcachon, which resembles the East, and where I should be able to paint the "Holy Women"? And at the same time I could make as many studies as anywhere else. And sculpture? If I go away, my statue will not be made.

To get rid of this indecision, I am going to paint in a boat the fog upon the Seine. That will do me good.

I have risen at 1 o'clock in the morning to say that I desired to paint something! I suffered from having no desires.

It is a flame which blazes and blazes; it is like the unexpected appearance of the one you love—an emotion, a warmth, a joy.

I blush, all alone by myself.

I want to paint a forest with the brilliant leaves and the marvelous tones of October, and with one or two figures in it. In the "Père Jacques" of Bastien-Lepage, as I remember it,

Digitized by Google

the forest was represented too late in the season; it was leafless and gray. I want to make it red, green, and gold.

And yet I shall not be at my best in that picture. In the "Holy Women" alone can I be that, and I do not dare to attempt them; I positively do not dare!

I must go to sleep.

Thursday, November 1st.—I have been working at *Grande-Jatte*, an alley of trees with brilliant leaves, medium canvas. Bojidar went with me, fortunately; for I had forgotten that it was a holiday, and when we reached there we found a multitude of bargemen, and Rosalie as an escort would, perhaps, have been unequal to compelling respect. So that I could wander about and paint in that little fashionable island, I had dressed myself as an old German woman, with two or three pieces of woolen cloth to disguise my figure, a cloak bought for 27 francs, and over my head a large black woolen shawl. On my feet I wore low shoes.

Friday, November 2d.—What I am doing is very pleasant. To-day, there was not even a cat to disturb me. On week days the island is deserted, especially at this season of the year. I hope I shan't fall ill from the exposure.

I must paint one picture, after which I shall not paint any more out of doors this winter. It ought to be finished this month. It is very simple and very beautiful. I will wrap up well, and leave only my eyes uncovered.

Monday, November 5th.—The leaves have fallen and I do not know how to finish my picture. I have no luck. Luck! What a terrible thing! An inexplicable and frightful power!

That picture in a boat! The canvas is before me, and I no longer know if I ought to finish it.

Oh, yes—but quickly, quickly, quickly! In two weeks I will show it to Robert-Fleury and Julian, who will be astounded.

If I did that, it would mean new life to me. I suffer frightful remorse because I did nothing of any importance last summer. I should like to be able to define better my peculiar

Digitized by Google

state of mind. I feel weakened, as if a great stagnation had stolen over me. I suppose that people who have been bled feel something like that.

My path is laid out, up to the month of May. Why should anything be changed in the month of May? Who knows the future?

That makes me think of all the good and remarkable things that may happen to me, and I console myself for the present.

I talked at dinner with my family; talked pleasantly and naturally, and in a very quiet and agreeable manner, as I did the first day that I put my hair up.

In short, I feel very calm; I shall work peacefully. It seems that all my movements will be full of repose, and that I shall regard the universe with a gentle condescension.

I am calm, as if I were, or because I am, talented, and I am as patient as if I were certain of the future. Who knows? Really, I am invested with a sort of dignity. I have confidence in myself. I am a power. Then—what? At all events, love has nothing to do with the matter. No! But outside of that, I do not see anything that interests me. Mademoiselle, you must interest yourself in your art.

Thursday, November 8th.—I read in a newspaper that, at the opening of the Industrial Exposition in the Rue de Sèze, there was a great crowd present, including our grand dukes. I ought to have gone there, and I let the day go by.

No, there is no use in struggling; I have no luck. And that has made me sing, accompanying myself on the harp. If I had been completely happy, I could not have worked, perhaps. They say that great artists have all suffered many hardships. My hardships are all those troubles which lead me always to the foot of art, my only reason for living.

Oh, to become celebrated!

When I imagine myself celebrated, it is like a great light—like the contact of an electric wire; I rise with a jump and commence to pace up and down the room.

Digitized by Google

People would say that if I had been married at seventeen, I should be like all the rest of the world. But this is a grave mistake. *To have married like any other girl, I should have to be like any other girl.*

Do you think that I have never been in love? *I* think so. Those passing fancies had the appearance of love, but they could not have been the *real thing*. Why do I continue to feel great weakness, like the distended cords of an instrument? Julian says that I remind him of an autumn landscape, a deserted pathway, full of fog and the desolation of winter.

"That is exactly the way I feel, dear Monsieur." Father Julian sometimes speaks the truth. "Will you show your picture to the great man?" "I would sooner leap out of a fifth-story window." "That is a proof that you feel that it is not worthy of you, and that you can do better."

Very true.

Saturday, November 10th.—I would like to attribute a slight fever, caused by the winter wind on the Seine, to mental causes.

I am working at home—at sculpture.

My poor child, *everything* pushes you to the foot of art; do not despise these various signs; go there! Fame alone can give you what you want, and they say you can obtain it if you like.

Sunday, November 11th.—I dined this evening at Jouy; I think I am really fond of those people there. They are pleasant and intelligent. I almost take pleasure in seeing them, and it is not drudgery, as when I go to other places.

Everything about me seems suddenly changed; everything is bright, calm, and beautiful. I know what I want to do, and all goes well.

Monday, November 12th.—Drumont, of *La Liberté*, has been to see us.

He detests my style of painting, but he paid me great compliments while confessing that he could not understand how

Digitized by Google

I, surrounded by luxury and refinement, could care for what was ugly. He thought my "Street Boys" ugly.

"Why did you not choose pretty faces? It would have been as easy."

I choose *expressive* faces, if I may be allowed to say so. Besides, the boys who run about the streets are not, as a rule, marvels of beauty; to find pretty children, one must go to the Champs Elysées and paint the poor little things who are all decked out with ribbons, and accompanied by governesses.

Where can you find free action? Where is the wild primitive liberty? Where is real expression? Well brought-up children are always more or less affected.

And then— Oh, well, I know that I am right.

Saturday, November 17th.—The country makes one feel very strongly the beauty of pictures.

The Parisians do not care much for the country; but they could not help doing so if they would only take the trouble to contemplate its grandeur, simplicity, beauty, and poetry. Every blade of grass, the trees, the ground, the looks of the women who pass by, the attitudes of the children, the manners of the old men, are all in the strictest harmony with the landscape.

Thursday, November 22d.—The *Illustration Universelle* of Russia publishes upon its first page an engraving of my picture, "Jean and Jacques."

It is the best illustrated Russian paper, and I feel at home to appear in it.

But yet it causes me no delight. Why not? I am pleased my picture is there, of course; but I am not carried away with joy.

Why not? Because a thing of that sort does not satisfy my ambition. If I had had a mention two years ago, I should have fainted away from happiness. If they had given me a medal last year, I should have wept on Julian's breast.

But now—

Digitized by Google

The course of events is logical, alas! All things are connected with and follow naturally each other, and everything is little by little prepared beforehand. A third-class medal next year would seem my natural due. If I have nothing, I shall feel outraged.

One feels keen delight only when the event is unexpected, when it is in some way a surprise. A second-class medal at the next *Salon* would make me very happy, because I do not expect it. But then, it is not the medal which is of importance, but the more or less degree of success which accompanies its award.

Friday, November 23d.—Saturday, November 24th.—Something very astonishing and very pleasant has happened to me. My "Angler," which I gave to the Ischia lottery, drifted to the Hôtel Drouot, and formed part of a collection of various pictures. The husband of one of our maids told her, in astonishment, that a picture signed Bashkirtseff was at the Hôtel des Ventes, and was to be sold this evening. Mamma and Dina went there, and were present when it was sold for 130 francs. That sum does not make much impression upon you, probably; but it strikes me as immense. There was no frame, only a narrow band, which cost 20 francs, and, consequently, my picture sold for 110 francs at the Hôtel Drouot. Mamma and Dina tried to make me believe that it was 230 francs, but I saw that the 2 was a 1 in the catalogue. Dina told the princess and others that the price was 430 francs. Oh, sacred truth! It really was 130. Mamma and Dina could not get over it; Dina said that she thought everybody was looking at her, and mamma turned away her head in embarrassment. I can not believe it yet, it seems to me such a splendid thing.

Wednesday, November 28th.—I have painted Dina's portrait, a harmony in white, and it is superb.

A young girl who was here yesterday, while rummaging through my portfolios, found an old drawing: "The Assassin-

Digitized by Google

ation of Cæsar." The subject seized hold of me. About 4 o'clock I went out to catch the harmony of colors presented by the Aurora Borealis, which, for the last three days, has been visible in Paris. I took a cab, and painted as I drove about. I wanted only harmonies of coloring. That done, I returned home, and began eagerly to read Suetonius and Plutarch. Montesquieu adores the history of the assassination as related by Plutarch. What a rhetorician he was! It is a careful and eloquent piece of writing; but Suetonius, in his recital of the same event, makes one shudder. It is an arraignment that sends cold shivers down the back. How great men live beyond the grave! At the end of many centuries, the stories of their lives and deaths make us tremble and weep. I wept for Gambetta. Every time that I read history I weep for Napoleon, Alexander, and Cæsar. But Alexander died a natural death, while Cæsar—

I will paint that picture *for myself* for reasons of sentiment, and for the crowd because the subject is a Roman one, and there will be in it studies of anatomy and blood. Other reasons for painting this subject are: I am a woman, and women have never done anything classical on a large scale, I want to use my faculties of composition and drawing, and it will be very beautiful.

One thing troubles me, however, and that is, the assassination occurred within the Senate, and not outside; that is a difficulty the less, and I would like to encounter all difficulties. When I feel that I am attacking the most difficult things, I become suddenly very cold, very decided; I collect myself, I concentrate myself, and I reach much better results than in the undertakings which are within the reach of my inferiors.

There is no need to go to Rome to paint the picture, and I will begin it as soon as— And yet, in the months of April and May, the spring tints are so exquisite that I intended to go to Argenteuil to paint the trees in bloom. There is so much to be done in life, and life is so short! I do not know

Digitized by Google

if I have the time even to do all that I have already thought of.

The "Holy Women;" the large bas relief, "Spring;" "Julius Cæsar;" "Ariadne." It makes my head swim. I would like to do them all, and at once. And they will be done so slowly, each in its own turn, with delays, and moments of indifference and disenchantment. Life is logical, and events follow each other naturally.

When I read how Brutus, pursued by phantoms, killed himself, I unconsciously exclaimed aloud: "You have done well, low brute; you have done well, ignoble criminal!"

To succeed with a large picture! Do not imagine that I am thinking of next year, or even the year after, but some time in the future. It would be such a glorious thing that I scarcely dare allow myself to dwell upon it.

Saturday, December 1st.—Have I made a mistake in my vocation? Who will give me back the best years of my life, which have been, perhaps, expended in pursuit of a will-o'-the-wisp?

But there is an excellent answer to these doubts of my worser self, and that is that I have really nothing better to do; if I had taken a different course and lived like other people, I should have had to suffer too much. But then I should not have attained this mental development which has given me a superiority so burdensome to myself. Stendhal knew at least one or two beings who were capable of understanding him, while I am in a frightful position; everybody seems to me dull and flat, and those I once took to be people of intelligence now appear to me stupid. Have I become what is called a misunderstood being? No; but still it seems to me that I am right to be surprised and discontented when people believe of me things of which I am incapable, and which attack my dignity, my delicacy, and even my position in society.

You see I want someone who would thoroughly understand me, to whom I could tell everything, and in whose words I

Digitized by Google

would recognize the reflection of my own thoughts. Well, my dear little girl, that would be love.

Perhaps so, but without going so far, if I had one or two people who would judge me in an intelligent manner and to whom I could talk, that in itself would be very pleasant; but I know none. The only one was Julian, and he is drifting more and more away from me. He is at times even annoying, when he begins his interminable teasing which has no point to it, especially when it has to do with questions of art; he does not understand that I see clearly, and that I wish to win success; he thinks, to use a vulgarism, that I am stuck on myself.

However, he is still my confidant, at times. As to an absolute equality of sentiments, that does not exist unless one is in love. And yet is it not, on the contrary, that absolute equality which gives birth to love? One's other self! I believe that that expression, which has been so much abused, is a very correct one.

My other self should be some one, of whom not a word, not a look, not even the tip of the ear, should be contrary to the idea which I have formed of him. I do not ask an impossible perfection, nor a being who would have nothing human about him; but I ask that his faults should be interesting ones, and such as would not lower him in my eyes; that he should be like the being I imagine, not an impossible divinity, but a man who would please me in everything, and in whom I should not suddenly discover some stupid, flat, unsatisfying, silly, cruel, false, or selfish trait. One blot, however small, would be sufficient to destroy all my interest in him, all my feeling for him.

Sunday, December 2d.—In short, my heart is absolutely empty, empty, empty! But I need these day-dreams for my own amusement, and yet I have felt almost all those things of which Stendhal speaks, apropos of true love which he calls love-passion—those thousand follies of the imagination, all

Digitized by Google

those childish caprices he mentions. Thus, I have often met with pleasure the most disagreeable people, because on that particular day they had chanced to be near the beloved object.

Besides, I think that no one, man or woman, who is working constantly, and is preoccupied with thoughts of fame, can love like those who have nothing but love to think of.

Balzac and Jules have both said something of the same kind; the total force of energy is a unit; if you spend it all on the right, there is nothing remaining for the left, or the efforts are much less in either direction, as there are two objects instead of one. "If you send 500,000 men to the Rhine, they can not be at the same time before Paris." It is then probable that my *tender* sentiments are disappearing by reason of this theory.

Monday, December 3d.—I am intelligent; I give myself credit for wit and penetration—in short, for all qualities of the brain; and I am right to do so. Well, under these conditions, why can I not judge myself? Since my reasoning powers are clear and true, I ought to be able to do it. Have I really talent, and shall I ever make a name for myself in art? *What is my opinion of myself?*

These are terrible questions, because I think ill of myself when compared to the ideal to which I long to attain; but, on the other side, when I compare myself to others—

One can not judge one's own self, and I especially can not—as I am not a genius, and have produced nothing yet to base a judgment upon.

I am in despair in regard to my work; every time I finish any thing, I want to do it all over again, and I find it thoroughly bad, because I always compare it with what I would like it to be. But what I see around me consoles me; I see people who do worse and who are much admired! And then it all depends on my mood. In short, in my very heart, I do not think much of myself as an artist; I prefer to say that, in the hope that I may be mistaken. In the first place, if I thought I had

Digitized by Google

genius, I would never complain of anything. But that word genius is so formidable that I laugh derisively as I write it in application to myself, even although I use it to say that I do not possess it. If I believed I possessed it, I should go mad! Well, I do not believe it, but I hope the world will.

Monday, December 10th.—In the morning I devoted myself to sculpture. In the afternoon, I painted the waist and the bouquet of my laughing head. The subject is a poor little thing, half-*danseuse*, half-model, and she laughs in a very funny way. The picture is now finished. After the gas was lighted, I drew a woman reading near an open piano. Finished that. If every day were like this, it would be delightful.

But fifty people who are never heard of do as much as I do, and do not complain that their genius stifles them. If your genius stifles you, you have none; those who possess it have the strength to support it.

The word *genius* is like the word *love;* I found difficulty in writing it for the first time, but once written I have used it every day, and apropos of everything. It is the same way with all things which appear to you at first enormous, frightful, unattainable. Once you reach them, you abandon yourself to them to make up for your former hesitation and fear. This witty observation does not seem to me to be very lucid, but I must expend my superfluous energy; I worked until 7 o'clock in the evening, but I have some of it left, and it must flow from the tip of my pen.

I am growing thin. Well, may God be merciful to me!

Tuesday, December 11th.—In the morning I did nothing! In the afternoon, sketched in the head of a girl five years old, profile and laughing. I intend to paint five or six heads all laughing, commencing with the head of a baby of eight months; then the little girl of this afternoon, then Armandine (Japhet's *danseuse*) full face, in a hat and a fur cape, with a bunch of violets on her shoulder; then I shall take a dude, gorgeously dressed and sucking his cane; then an innocent young girl;

Digitized by Google

and, lastly, an old man and an old woman. All to be framed together!

"Laughter is the attribute of man." These different laughing faces might be effective. I will do them very quickly, as I did Armandine's, and they will do for some small exhibition.

Sunday, December 23d.—True artists can not be happy. In the first place they know that the great mass of people do not understand them; they know that they work for a handful of individuals, and the rest follow their own bad tastes or the opinion of *Figaro*. The ignorance that pervades all classes, in regard to matters pertaining to art, is shocking.

Those who speak understandingly of art follow what they have read or heard said by people who are considered competent judges.

I think that there are days when one feels all these things too acutely—days when vapid talk is peculiarly unbearable; when nonsensical speeches and actions make you suffer; when to listen for two hours to the exchange of asinine remarks, which do not possess even the merit of gaiety or worldly polish, is a positive affliction.

Observe, I am not one of those choice souls who weep when they are forced to listen to the common-places of the *Salon*, its little affectations, its customary compliments, and its comments upon the weather and the Italian opera. I am not silly enough to demand interesting conversation everywhere, and all the common-places of society—sometimes gay, oftener dull—do not disturb my tranquillity, and I can listen to them sometimes, even with pleasure; but to listen to real folly, real stupidity, the lack of—in short, worldly common-places, spoken by brainless people—to listen to all this is like being roasted over a slow fire.

Saturday, December 29th.—Oh, misery! There are days which are black, sad, despairing; all these stories, all these things that have been said, thought—invented!

But I have done nothing immoral! And when I think::

Digitized by Google

Ah! my friends, lose everything, but keep up appearances!

In short, these petty troubles make me profoundly unhappy.

Paradoxical as it may sound, one is entirely right to do infamously wrong.

And these little, contemptible, petty things, of which I am innocent, and which can not be trampled under foot. Oh, misery!

There are sad, despairing, black days! I am loaded down with calumnies.

And I have done no wrong, either to myself or to others. Claire and Villevieille work and I weep, writing at the other end of the library.

There are days when one throws out light, and others when one is like an extinguished lantern. I am extinguished.

Monday, December 31st.—The Maréchale and Claire dined yesterday with the Princess Mathilde, and Claire told me that Lefebvre said to her that I had undoubted talent; that I was a very uncommon person; that I went every evening into society, and, in addition to this, I was watched over, directed by a celebrated painter (this was said with a meaning look).

Claire (looking him full in the face)—"What celebrated painter? Julian?"

Lefebvre—"No; Bastien-Lepage."

Claire—"But you are entirely mistaken, Monsieur; she goes out very little, and she works all the time. As for Bastien-Lepage, she sees him in her mother's *salon*, and he never goes up to her studio."

Claire is a dear girl, and she spoke the truth, for God knows well that that wretched Jules gives me no help whatever; and yet Lefebvre seemed to believe it!

It is 2 o'clock. The new year has begun, and at midnight, at the theatre, with my watch in my hand, I made a wish in one single word; a word which is beautiful, sonorous, magnificent, intoxicating, whether written or spoken: FAME!

Digitized by Google

1884.

Wednesday, January 2d.—My aunt Hélène, my father's sister, died a week ago. Paul telegraphed the news to us.

And now we have received another dispatch to-day. My Uncle Alexander has died of an attack of apoplexy. We were greatly shocked. The poor man adored his family, and was madly in love with his wife.

As he had never read Balzac, nor perhaps any other novelist, he did not know the proper phrases of sentiment; but I remember some things that he said, and the recollection of which makes my grief all the deeper. Some one tried to make him believe that his wife was receiving the attentions of a neighbor, and I remember to have heard him say: "Well, suppose this infamous thing were true! Is not my wife, whom I married when she was fifteen, my own flesh, my own blood, my own soul? Are we not *one?* If I had done wrong, would I not forgive myself? How would it be possible not to forgive my wife? Why, it would be the same as if, to punish myself, I put out one of my eyes or cut off an arm."

And then, during my last visit to Russia, he said to me: "I don't know exactly how to explain to you what I want to say, my little Marie, but you are so bright that you will understand. Formerly, I had so many things to occupy my attention, so many worries, such a thirst to acquire money and become rich, that I did not think of my wife as I should have done; but now that my business affairs are wound up, I have no longer those dry and absorbing details to contend with, and I think now only of happiness, and how to grant the smallest desires of my wife, my dear, adored Nadine. Yes, now all is

Digitized by Google

different; it would take too long to tell you, but all is different."

He leaves three children: Etienne, who is sixteen; Julie, fifteen, and Alexander, eight or ten months.

And his poor wife is only thirty-three!

Friday, January 4th.—There is no doubt about it; I have consumption, and it is growing worse.

I am ill; no one knows anything of it, but I have fever every evening, and everything goes badly, and I hate to speak of it.

Saturday, January 5th.—The opening of the Manet exhibition at the *École des Beaux Arts.*

I went with mamma.

It is only a year since Manet died. I did not know much about him. Taken as a whole, the exhibition is a remarkable one.

It is incoherent and childish, yet grand.

There are some absurd things, but also some superb pictures. A little more, and he would have been a great genius. His subjects are almost always ugly, sometimes deformed, but they are always living. There are some splendid sketches among them.

And in the worst things, one feels a certain something that makes one look at them without disgust or weariness. They reveal such an extraordinary self-confidence, united to an ignorance no less extraordinary. It is like the infancy of a genius. And then, they are things borrowed almost entirely from Titian (the sketch of the woman and the negro, for instance), Velasquez, Courbet, and Goya. But all these painters stole from each other. Take Molière, too. He plagiarized entire pages, word for word; I am a reader, and I know it.

Tuesday, January 8th.—Dina sits well, but there is something which shows that she does not feel the pose, and her whole expression changes although she does not move. I would far rather have a woman who moved a great deal, but

Digitized by Google

who now and then caught the exact expression. Well, it little matters; it isn't good, that's all!

As I will not yield to bad luck, I have a frightful struggle with myself; my rage reaches such a point that I appear extraordinarily calm, and my movements are as slow as those of an invalid, while I am crazy to break and tear everything to pieces.

Monday, January 14th.—I feel as if I had been to Damvillers. Emile Bastien has told us all about it—his brother's new picture, his manner of living, etc. He does nothing secretly, he has forbidden no one to speak, he— If he has not invited us to see his pictures at Concarneau, it is because he never invites anyone to see them; he would think even that it would be conceited to invite anyone to see pictures painted off-hand at Concarneau, where he went for rest, and that the very kind way he was treated at our house should make ceremony unnecessary. He would have been delighted if we had come, etc. He says that even to see his important pictures he issues no invitations; he only tells his humble brother to inform certain friends. But this is something more serious; when his brother spoke to him of my picture, he said to him: "Why did not you tell me about it in Paris? I would have gone to see it."

"I said nothing to him in Paris," continued his brother, "because, if he had come, you would have hidden everything, as usual; he knows nothing of what you are doing outside of your *Salon* pictures. You turn your canvases to the wall—in short, do you know he will never want to see your pictures if you act like that?"

"He will if I wish it, if I ask advice from him."

"He will always be delighted to give it to you."

"But I am not his pupil, unfortunately."

"Why should you not be? He would ask nothing better; he would be very much flattered if you would consult him, and he would give you sensible, disinterested advice; for his judgment is excellent and unprejudiced, and he would be

Digitized by Google

happy to have an interesting pupil. Believe me, he would be flattered and delighted."

Wednesday, January 16th.—The architect has told me that among his brother's numerous projects for pictures is one to represent the "Shepherds at Bethlehem."

For the last few days my head has been filled with the subject, and this afternoon I seemed to see the picture clearly as in a vision. Yes, the "Shepherds at Bethlehem." A sublime subject, and which he will render more sublime still.

Yes, my vision was so clear, and I received from it such a distinct impression that I can compare it only to the vision of the shepherds themselves—holy enthusiasm and profound admiration.

For the last two or three hours my admiration has made me madly in love. Can you understand that?

Can you imagine all the mystery, tenderness, and superb simplicity he will put into the picture? One who knows his work can do so, by noticing the mysterious and fantastic resemblance between "Joan of Arc" and "Evening in the Village," the effect of which will in some way be reproduced in the "Shepherds." Ah! but don't you find it delightful of me to grow enthusiastic over pictures I have never seen, and which do not exist? Pshaw! let me be ridiculous in the eyes of the majority; two or three dreamers will feel with me, and, if need be, I could do without even them. "Joan of Arc" was never appreciated in France, but it was enthusiastically received in America. "Joan of Arc" is a masterpiece, both in sentiment and workmanship.

You should have heard Paris speak of it. It was a shame!

Is it possible that only "Phædras" and "Auroras" are to be crowned with success? Moreover, has the public always cared for Millet, Rousseau, or Corot? No; they admired them after they became the fashion.

What is most shameful in our day is the hypocrisy of enlightened people, who profess to believe that *this art* is not

Digitized by Google

serious, nor elevated, and who burn incense before those "who follow the traditions of the masters." Is there any need to dwell upon and explain the stupidity of such ideas? What, then, is high art, if it be not the art which, while painting flesh, hair, garments, trees, to perfection, so that they seem absolute reality, paints at the same time souls, minds, existences? "Joan of Arc," they say, is not high art, because she is depicted as a peasant in her natural surroundings, and not with white hands and clad in armor.

No; his "Evening in the Village" is inferior to "Joan of Arc," and idiotic or dishonest critics praise it in order to make it appear that his talents are confined to one style; and they are furious that this man, who has been a painter of peasants, should dare to paint anything else, even an historical peasant like Joan of Arc.

Hypocrites and Pharisees!

For, after all, any one of us artists, no matter who, can paint flesh; but we have not the subtle, divine afflatus which he and he alone possesses. In the eyes of his figures I can see their lives, and it seems to me as if I knew them. I have endeavored to feel the same thing when looking at the pictures of other artists, and I have not succeeded.

Would you prefer the execution of Lady Jane Grey or a Bajazet to the animated, *living* glance of a little girl running along the street?

This incomparable artist possesses a quality which is found only in the religious paintings of the Italians, when the artists painted and believed at the same time.

Has it never happened to you, when alone in the country in the evening, under a very clear sky, to feel troubled, pervaded by a mysterious sentiment, by aspirations toward the infinite; to feel as if you were, so to speak, on the eve of some great event—something supernatural? And have you never had day-dreams, which transported you into unknown worlds?

If you have not, you will never comprehend Bastien-Lepage,

Digitized by Google

and I advise you to purchase an "Aurora" of Bouguereau's, or an historical picture by Cabanel.

And all this, my dear, means that you adore the genius of little Bastien?

Yes.

So, now, that you are satisfied on that point I will go to bed. Amen!

Sunday, January 20th.—It is a sad thing, but I have no woman friend; I care for no one, and no one cares for me.

If I have no friend, I know perfectly well that it is because, in spite of myself, I allow it to be too clearly seen that "I look down upon the crowd."

No one likes to be humiliated. I might console myself by thinking that the lofty intellects of this world have never been loved. People crowd about them and bask in the rays of their genius, but at heart, they hate them, and, whenever they have an opportunity, slander them. At present, the question of a statue to Balzac is being agitated, and the journals are publishing every day anecdotes and incidents of his life, gathered from the lips of the great man's friends. Heaven save us all from such friends as they have proved themselves to be—friends who divulge every mean, ridiculous, and low trait!

I prefer enemies; they would not be so widely believed.

Saturday, February 23d.—The Maréchale and Claire arrived about 1 o'clock to receive Madeleine Lemaire, who came to see the picture. She is a celebrated water-color artist, and a woman of the world besides; but she obtains large prices for her pictures. Naturally, she said only flattering things.

And I am in a thoroughly bad temper. Probably because I am soon to die, my life comes back to me from the beginning in all its details. I remember stupid things, which bring the tears to my eyes; I never went to balls as often as other girls—three or four balls a year, that was all; I could have gone often in the last two years, but those things no longer had the power to amuse me.

Digitized by Google

And it is the great artist who regrets that? Yes. And now? Well, now there are other things than balls that I long for; those reunions where one meets thinkers, writers, artists, singers—the whole world of intellect, in fact.

The most philosophical and most sensible person in the world need not be ashamed to want to meet, once a week or twice a month, the people who are the flower of Parisian intelligence. I talk about longings now—why, I know not, for I am going to die. I have always been unfortunate in everything. On account of my work, I have become acquainted with the best people in Paris, but that has turned out to be only one humiliation the more.

I am too unhappy not to hope that there is a God Who can take pity upon me if He wants to. But, if such a God existed, would He allow things to be as they are? What have I done that I should be so unhappy?

No reading of the Bible would ever make me believe. That is only an historical document, where all that relates to God is told in a silly and childish way.

I can believe only in a God Who is an abstract, philosophical God; a great mystery; the earth, the heavens, the universe—*Pan.*

But that is a God Who can do nothing for us. That is a God Whom one can imagine and admire when looking at the stars and reflecting on scientific, spiritualistic, Renan-like questions. But the God I long to believe in is One Who sees everything, Who interests Himself in everything, and of Whom we can ask everything. But if this God existed, would He allow things to be as they are?

Tuesday, March 11th.—It is raining. It is not that alone that makes me depressed, but I am worse, and it is all so unjust. Heaven is too cruel to me!

But I am still of an age when one finds happiness even in the thought of death.

It seems to me that no one loves *everything* so much as I

Digitized by Google

do—art, music, painting, books, society, dress, luxury, excitement, tranquillity, laughter, sadness, melancholy, idle chatter, love, cold, sunshine; all seasons, all atmospheric conditions; the quiet plains of Russia and the mountains about Naples; the snow of winter, the rains of autumn, the spring and its changes, the calm days and beautiful starlight nights of summer—I love and admire all. Everything presents itself to me under an aspect either interesting or sublime. I should like to see everything, to possess everything, to embrace everything, to become absorbed in everything, and to die, since die I must, in two years or thirty years; to die in an ecstasy of joy at the thought of solving the last mystery, the end of all things or the divine beginning.

This universal love is not the result of being a consumptive; I have always possessed it, and I remember that just ten years ago, in 1874, I wrote:

"In vain would I choose; all seasons are beautiful.

"I want *all;* a *portion* would not satisfy me.

"Everything pales into insignificance before the beauties of nature.

"In fact, everything in life pleases me; I find everything agreeable; and, while demanding happiness, I find happiness in being miserable. My body weeps and laments, yet something within me, which is stronger than I am, rejoices at it all."

That good Tony Robert-Fleury dined with us this evening. He says that my picture of the *gamins* is greatly improved; in short, that it is very good, and that it will be accepted at the *Salon.*

I forgot to say that the picture is to be called "A Meeting."

Wednesday, March 12th.—Dina's portrait will not be finished, so I shall send only the "Meeting." There was a friendly gathering at Madame Hochon's this evening; many artists and a few ladies like the Duchess d' Uzès, the Countess Cornet, the Maréchale, and ourselves. Among the artists were Cabanel,

Digitized by Google

Jalabert, Siebert, G. Ferrier, and Boulanger. We had a little music, and Salvayre played and sang some airs from his "Henri III." All these people, not excepting Cabanel, were very cordial to me.

Saturday, March 15th.—Abbema came to see my picture this morning.

I thought the 15th would never come. The weather is exquisite, and on Monday or Tuesday I am going into the country to work. I will no longer admire Bastien-Lepage; I scarcely know him, his nature is so—reserved; and then it is much better to work with what talent one has than to waste one's admiration on the talent of others.

Sunday, March 16th.—The pictures have been sent.

I returned home at half-past 6 so fatigued and exhausted that the sensation was delightful. You can not think how thoroughly I enjoy extreme sensation; even overpowering pain is a delight.

Once, when I crushed my finger, the pain was so keen for half an hour that I enjoyed it.

So it was with the thorough fatigue of this evening, when, with all my muscles relaxed, and my limbs heavy, I lay in the bath and afterward in bed, my brain full of incoherent, shadowy things; I went to sleep murmuring aloud disjointed words suggested by the confused thoughts that flitted through my head—Cabanel, varnishing day, the Maréchale, Breslau, painting, Algeria, the line, Wolff!

Wednesday, March 19th.—I have found an orchard at Sèvres to paint in, and I did not return home until 8 o'clock—worn out. We had company to dinner.

Yesterday, the balloting for members took place at the club of Russian artists. I was unanimously elected.

Claire saw a gentleman to-day who told her that he had been to see Bastien-Lepage and found him very ill; and the next day he met the doctor, who said: "The man is very ill, but I do not think it is rheumatism; the trouble is here," and

Digitized by Google

he tapped himself on the stomach. So, then, he is really ill! He went to Blidah three or four days ago, accompanied by his mother.

Saturday, March 22d.—I have not yet begun work at Sèvres, but my preparations are all made.

Julian writes: "Your picture has been accepted and will receive a number three, at least."

What does that *at least* signify?

God be thanked! But I never doubted that my picture would be received.

Monday, March 24th.—For some days past there has been something discordant in my surroundings, which has driven me to solitude and made me see myself as I really am, so—but no, it is all too sad for me to complain. I am heavy, dull, and stupefied.

I have been re-reading a book which I read some years ago and did not particularly care for, but which now I greatly admire. I speak of "Madame Bovary." The literary style of the book, its execution, so to speak, is perfect. But the style is far from being its only merit.

In the midst of these clouds which surround me, I see more clearly the realities of life—realities so harsh and so bitter that the tears will fall as I write them. But I can not even write them. And then, what is the use? What is the use? I have spent six years in working ten hours a day, to gain what? A meagre knowledge of art and a fatal disease. I have been to see my doctor to-day, and I talked so pleasantly that he said: "What good spirits you always have!"

If I persist in hoping that "fame" will repay me for all, I must live, and to live I must take care of myself.

Here are both dreams and frightful realities!

One never believes in any trouble until it actually comes. I remember when, as quite a little girl, I took my first journey on the railway, and for the first time in my life came into contact with strangers. I had taken my place, and filled up two

Digitized by Google

seats with all sorts of objects, when two travelers entered. "These places are taken," said I, coolly. "Oh, very well," said one of the gentlemen, "I will call the conductor."

I thought this was an unmeaning threat, such as I had been used to at home, and no words could describe the cold chill that seized me when the conductor cleared the seat, which the gentleman immediately occupied. This was my first *reality*.

For a long time I have been threatened with a serious disease, but I have never believed in it. Ah, well! I would not have had time to tell you all this if I had not been waiting for my model, and grumbling is better than doing nothing.

The March wind is keen and the skies are gray and lowering.

I began yesterday quite a large picture in the old orchard at Sèvres. The subject is a young girl seated under an apple tree in full bloom; a path leading off into the distance, and everywhere the branches of all sorts of blossoming fruit trees; a very fresh, green turf, sprinkled with violets and little yellow flowers. The girl sits in revery with half-closed eyes, her chin in the palm of her left hand and her elbow upon her knee.

The treatment of the picture must be very simple, and the spectator must be made to feel the breath of spring-time which makes the girl dreamy. There will be sunshine streaming through the branches. It is to be about five feet wide and a little more in height.

So, then, my picture has received only a number three, and I am not to be on the line—not even that.

It has deeply and hopelessly discouraged me, but it is no one's fault; it is simply my lack of talent. Yes, this occurrence has shown me, beyond any doubt, that if I ceased to have any belief in my art I should die at once. And if my hopes of success are again put to flight, as they were this evening, there will be nothing left for me but death.

Digitized by Google

Thursday, March 27th.—I am very busy with my pictures. Why have I not yet succeeded in doing anything in painting as good as my pastel of three years ago?

Monday, March 31st.—Almost nothing done; my picture will be badly hung, and I shall receive no medal.

I stayed in a warm bath for more than an hour, which brought on a slight hemorrhage. That was foolish, you will say. Very likely, but I have no longer any sense; I am discouraged and half mad with my fruitless struggles against everything.

There is nothing to be said, nothing to be done. If this state of affairs continues, I may live a year or so; but if my mind were at rest, I might live twenty years longer.

Yes, that number three is difficult to swallow. Zilhardt and Breslau received number two. Why not I? There were forty judges, and it seems that I received so many votes for number two that everyone thought I would get it. Let us suppose that I had fifteen votes for it, and twenty-five against it; the committee is composed of fifteen or twenty men of note, and twenty unknown intriguers, who paint atrocious pictures. Everyone knows this to be a fact. Nevertheless, it is a frightful blow to me, but it has not blinded me to the truth of the matter, and I see myself as I am. No, there is nothing to be said. I begin to feel that if my picture had been very good—

Ah! never, never, never have I touched the depths of despair as I have to-day. As long as there is something lower, there is still hope, but to set foot on the black and slimy bottom of the gulf; to say: It is not circumstances that are to blame, nor my family, nor the world, but my own lack of talent—ah! that is too horrible, and there is no power, human or divine, that can help me. I do not see how it will be possible for me to go on with my work; everything seems at an end.

Then this is an extreme sensation? Yes. Well, according to the theories you propounded the other day, you ought to find it an enjoyment. I am caught in my own trap!

Digitized by Google

But I don't care. I am going to take some bromide, which will put me to sleep. And then, God is great, and there always arrives some little consolation after great troubles.

And to think that there is no one to whom I can tell all this, that I can not even have the consolation of talking over my troubles—no, there is no one, no one!

Blessed are the simple minded; blessed are they who believe in a good God, to Whom they can appeal! What have I to appeal to Him for? Because I have no talent?

You see, therefore, this is a supreme sensation; this is the very depths of misery; and I ought, therefore, to enjoy it.

Perhaps I should if there were any spectators of my misery.

The sorrows of people who afterward become celebrated are related by their friends, for they have friends—people to whom they talk. I have none. And even if I should utter my lamentations, if I should declare to those about me: "No, I will paint no more!" what difference would it make? No one would be the loser, for I have no talent.

But of all the things I must keep to myself and impart to no one, the worst, the most humiliating, is this: to *feel*, to *believe*, to *know* that I am nothing! If this were to continue, I could not live.

Tuesday, April 1st.—It continues, but as I had to find some comfort I have taken this—I may be mistaken. I have shed so many tears that I can no longer see clearly.

They say to me: Oh, the number does not amount to anything; no one notices that.

Yes, but the place in which it is hung?

Wednesday, April 2d.—I went to Petit's (the exhibition in the Rue de Sèze), and remained for an hour before the wonderful pictures of Bastien-Lepage and Cazin.

Then I went to Robert-Fleury's, and with a gay, unconcerned air, asked:

"Well, Monsieur, how did things go at the committee?"

"Oh, very well. When your picture was passed, they said

Digitized by Google

—not one or two of them, but several: "Stay, that is good; that must have a number two."

"Oh, Monsieur, is it possible?"

"Yes, indeed; I don't say so to give you pleasure; it is really so. Then they voted, and if the president had not been flustered that day, you would have had number two. Your picture was considered good, and was very favorably received."

"But I have a number three?"

"Yes, but that is due to a misfortune. It is simple ill-luck. You should have had a number two."

"But what fault do they find with the picture?"

"None."

"None? It is not bad, then?"

"It is good."

"But, then?"

"It is a misfortune, and that is all. Now, if you could find a member of the committee to ask that it be hung on the line, it would be done; for it is good."

"Could not you?"

"I am simply a member of the committee, whose duty it is to see that the order of the numbers is respected; but if any other member asks it, be sure I will not oppose it."

I then went to see Julian, who laughed a little at Robert-Fleury's advice, and said that I need not worry much, and that he would be very much astonished if I were not on the line. And then, Robert-Fleury told me, on his word of honor, that I deserve it, and that, morally speaking, I have it. Morally speaking! And he said, too, that it would be only justice.

Ah! no; to ask as a favor what is my right would be too much!

Friday, April 4th.—Bastien-Lepage's exhibition is, no doubt, a brilliant one; but the pictures are almost all old ones. They are: 1. A portrait of Madame Drouet, of last year; 2. Another portrait of 1882; 3. A landscape with two washerwomen, and

Digitized by Google

an apple tree in bloom, also of 1882; 4. His picture for the *concours*, which was awarded the *Prix de Rome* (he was awarded only the second *Prix de Rome*), of 1875; and then, of last summer, there is a sketch made at Concarneau: "The Pool of Damvillers." That makes five. 6. "The Wheat, or the Mowers," where only the back of one little mower is to be seen. An old beggar gathering wood in a forest makes seven. "The Pool of Damvillers," the mowers, and the beggar are full of sunlight. If there are many landscape painters as fine as Bastien-Lepage, I shall be astonished to know it.

But a great artist can have no specialty. I know that I have seen at Bastien-Lepage's an "Andromeda," which, although small, is as fine a study of the nude as anyone could make. Precision, character, nobility of form, grace, delicacy of tone, it possesses all these, and, moreover, the execution is both broad and delicate; in short, it is nature itself. When he wished to show an effect of twilight, he painted "Evening in the Village," which is a real masterpiece. The poetical touch, *à la* Millet, was perhaps overdone. I say *à la* Millet to make my meaning understood; for Bastien is himself, and if Millet has painted evening and moonlight scenes, that is no reason why others should not do the same.

The effect of "Evening in the Village" is magical. Why did I not buy it?

He has painted also views of London, with the Thames, where you can positively see the flow of the water—that heavy, thick water, which seems to turn over and over, as it were. His small portraits are exquisitely beautiful—as beautiful as the small portraits of the old masters. And the life-size portrait of his mother is unsurpassable in execution; for it is nature itself, no matter how closely it is examined. Finally, his "Joan of Arc" is an inspiration of genius.

Bastien-Lepage is thirty-five. Raphael died at thirty-seven, having painted more pictures than Bastien-Lepage has yet produced. But Raphael, from the age of twelve, was caressed

Digitized by Google

and patronized by duchesses and cardinals, who made him work with the great Perugino; and Raphael, at fifteen, made copies of his master's pictures that could not be distinguished from the originals, and thenceforward was a great artist. Then, in those great pictures which astonish us as much on account of the time it must have taken to paint them as by their fine qualities, the largest part of the work was done by pupils, and in many of them there is nothing of Raphael except the general outlines.

And Bastien-Lepage, in his earlier days, made his living by sorting letters in the Paris post office. He exhibited his first picture in 1869, I think.

In short, he had neither duchesses, nor cardinals, nor Perugino. But he took all the village prizes for drawing, and he was only about fifteen or sixteen when he came to Paris.

But he had more advantages than I, who have always lived in surroundings little favorable to art, taking a few lessons in my childhood, as all children do, and then fourteen or fifteen lessons of an hour each, in the space of three or four years. That gives me six years and a few months of study; but there were always journeys and a serious illness to interfere. And what have I accomplished? Have I progressed as far as Bastien had in 1874? That question is pure insanity.

If I should say in society, or even in the presence of artists, what I write of Bastien, people would say that I was entirely mad, some from conviction, and others on principle, in order not to admit the superiority of so young an artist.

Saturday, April 5th.—These are my plans:

I will first finish my Sèvres picture. Then I will apply myself seriously to sculpture in the morning, and to study of the nude in the afternoon. That will take me into July. In July I will begin "The Evening," which is a long, treeless road, stretching across a plain, and fading in the distance into a sunset sky. Upon the road is a cart, to which two oxen are attached; the cart is loaded with hay, on top of which is

Digitized by Google

lying an old man, face downward, his chin in his hands. The profile stands out in relief against the sunset. The oxen are led by a small boy.

This ought to be simple, impressive, poetical, etc.

When I have finished this, and two or three little things, I will go to Jerusalem, where I will pass the winter, and devote myself to painting and the recovery of my health.

And in a year from now Bastien will proclaim me a great artist.

I write all this down, for it is interesting to see afterward how our plans turn out.

Sunday, April 6th.—My aunt left for Russia this evening.

Saturday, April 12th.—Julian writes that the picture is hung on the line.

Wednesday, April 16th.—I go every day to Sèvres. My picture has taken complete possession of me. The apple tree is in blossom; all about are sprouting leaves of delicate green, and the sunshine plays on the lovely spring verdure. The grass is full of violets and yellow flowers like stars. The air is redolent of perfume, and the young girl who lies dreaming at the foot of the tree is "languid and intoxicated," as André Theuriet says.

Tuesday, April 29th.—To-morrow is varnishing day, and as early as possible I shall see the *Figaro* and the *Gaulois*. What will they say of me? Will it be good, bad, or nothing at all?

Wednesday, April 30th.—The disaster is not complete, for the *Gaulois* speaks very well of me. It gives me a separate notice. It is very nice, for it is written by Fourcaud, the Wolff of the *Gaulois*; and, as the *Gaulois* appears with a plan of the *Salon*, the same as the *Figaro*, it seems to me that that fact gives it an equal or almost equal importance.

The *Voltaire*, which publishes a number of the same sort, treats me like the *Gaulois*. Both are very important notices.

The *Journal des Arts* also speaks of me, and the *Intransigeant* treats me as well. The other journals will have

Digitized by Google

criticisms from day to day. The *Figaro*, the *Gaulois*, and the *Voltaire* are the only ones that give elaborate notices as early as varnishing day.

Am I contented? That is an easy question to answer. Not too much nor too little.

There is just enough to keep me from being unhappy—that is all.

I have just come from the *Salon*. We went there at noon, and stayed until 5 o'clock, an hour before closing— I have a headache.

We remained for a long time on a bench opposite my picture.

It attracted considerable attention, and I laughed as I thought not one of the crowd could imagine that the artist was the elegantly dressed young girl who sat opposite, showing the tips of her pretty little shoes.

Ah! all this is much better than it was last year.

Is it a success—I mean a veritable, serious success?

Upon my word, I think so.

Breslau exhibited two portraits. I saw only one of them, and it greatly surprised me. It was an imitation of Manet, and I did not like it. She has not improved. What I am going to say is frightful, perhaps; but the truth is I am not sorry; neither am I pleased. There is room for everybody; still, I confess that I prefer to have things as they are.

Bastien-Lepage sends only his little picture of last year—"The Forge."

It is an old blacksmith in the obscurity of his shop. It is as good as the darkest little canvases of the famous galleries.

He is not well enough yet to work. The poor architect looks sad, and says that he is going to throw himself into the river.

I also am sad; and I think that, in spite of my painting, my sculpture, my reading, and my music—yes, in spite of all that, I am bored.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, May 3d.—Emile Bastien-Lepage came at half-past 11, and I went down to see him, greatly surprised at his call.

He had a host of pleasant things to tell me. I have really made a *great success.*

"I do not mean compared with your previous work, or with that of your fellow-students, but with that of everybody. I saw Ollendorff yesterday, and he said that if it were the work of a Frenchman the government would buy it. 'Ah! that Monsieur Bashkirtseff is a very talented man (the picture is signed M. Bashkirtseff).' Then I told him that you were a young girl, and, I added, pretty also. No! he would not believe it; and everyone is speaking of the picture as a great success."

Ah! I begin to believe it a little. For fear of believing too much, I have allowed myself to feel only the most moderate satisfaction.

I shall be the last to believe that I have been successful; but it appears that I really have.

"A real and very great artistic success," said Emile Bastien.

Then as great a success as Jules Bastien in 1874 or 1875? Ah, if it were! I am not yet overwhelmed with joy, because I scarcely believe it.

I want to be overwhelmed with joy.

My excellent friend, Emile Bastien, asked me to sign a permission for Charles Baude, the engraver, and an intimate friend of his brother's, to photograph and engrave my picture for the *Monde Illustré.*

He also told me that Friant (who is a man of talent) is enthusiastic over my picture.

People whom I do not know are talking about me, are interested in me, and are discussing my merits. What happiness! Ah! I can scarcely believe it, after having desired and expected it so long.

Digitized by Google

I received a letter from somebody or other a day or two ago, asking me for permission to photograph my picture, and I am glad I waited before granting it, for I prefer Baude should do it—the one whom Bastien-Lepage calls Charlot, and to whom he writes letters eight pages long.

I am going down to mamma's *salon* to receive the congratulations of all the imbeciles, who believe that I paint as a society woman does, and who pay me the same compliments they do to Alice and the other little fools.

I think Rosalie is the one who feels my success most keenly. She is wild with delight; speaks to me with the tenderness an old nurse might show her foster-child, and tells things right and left in the most garrulous manner.

Monday, May 5th.—Death is a word we write and speak easily; but to think—to *believe* that one is going to die soon, is another thing. Do I *believe* that I am going to die soon? No; but I *fear* that I am.

There is no use in disguising the fact; I am a consumptive. My right lung is far gone, and the left has been affected a little for a year. Both sides. If I were differently built, I should be almost thin. I am not so thin as most young girls, but I am not as I once was. A year ago I was superb, neither too stout nor too thin; now the flesh of my arms is no longer firm, and instead of my shoulders being rounded and beautifully formed, the bones are beginning to show through. I look at myself every day when I take my bath. My hips still retain their beautiful shape, and my legs are still plump, but the muscles on the knees show through too plainly. In short, my health is hopelessly impaired. But, miserable creature, take care of yourself! Why, I do take the greatest care of myself. I have had my chest burned on both sides, and I shall not be able to wear a low-necked dress for four months. And I shall have to be burned again from time to time, so that I can sleep. There is no longer any question of my getting well. I seem to be exaggerating things—but no,

Digitized by Google

it is really true! But, besides the burnings, there are so many things to be done, and I do them all. I take cod-liver oil, arsenic, and goat's milk. They have bought me a goat. I may linger on for a while, but I am doomed. I have had too much to fight against, and it has killed me. It is natural enough, but it is horrible all the same.

There are so many interesting things in life. Take books, for instance.

They have brought me a complete set of Zola, a complete set of Renan, and some volumes of Taine. I prefer Taine's "Revolution" to Michelet's.

Michelet is rambling and uncertain, and despite his sympathy with the sublime side of the Revolution, and Taine's evident desire to dwell on the worse phases of it, I like Taine best.

And my painting?

Ah, if one could believe in a kind God, who arranges our affairs for the best!

Tuesday, May 6th.—Reading absorbs me. I have read all of Zola. He is a giant.

Ah! dear Frenchmen, there is another that you do not seem to appreciate.

Wednesday, May 7th.—I have received from Dusseldorff a request for permission to engrave and publish my *Salon* picture, as well as some other pictures of mine. It is amusing. But I can not yet believe in it all. Yes, it must be a success; everyone tells me so, and they did not say so last year; last year I had a little success with my pastel, but this year it is very different. Still, it is not a phenomenal success; and my name announced in any *salon* to-night would not produce any sensation, unless the room happened to be filled with painters. The sort of success that would fill me with pride and happiness would be to have all conversation stop, and all eyes turned in my direction, when my name was announced.

Since the opening of the *Salon*, there is not a paper that has

Digitized by Google

not spoken of my picture. And that is not all. This morning there is an article in the *Paris*, entitled "Society Painters." I come immediately after Claire, and I have as many lines as she. I am a Greuze; I am a blonde, with the deep eyes and imperious brow of one who is destined to succeed. I dress very elegantly, I have great talent, and I paint excellent pictures of the realistic school, after the style of Bastien-Lepage. And, also, I have the smile and winning grace of a child! And I am not transported with delight? Why, not at all!

Thursday, May 8th.—I have worked a little at home to-day.

How is it that Wolff has said nothing of my picture? Possibly he has not seen it; perhaps his attention was diverted when he was in the room in which it is hung. It can not be because I am unworthy to be noticed by the great man, for he notices people who are of less importance than I.

What is the reason, then? Is it ill-luck, like the number three? I do not believe in ill-luck; it is too easy a way out of difficulties, and too stupid. I believe it was my lack of merit.

And the most astonishing thing is that this is true.

Friday, May 9th.—I am reading Zola, and I have a profound admiration for him. His criticisms and studies are wonderful, and I am madly in love with him. To please such a man I would do anything! Do you think me capable of the same sort of love that other women feel? Oh, heaven!

Well, I love Bastien-Lepage as I love Zola, whom I have never seen—who is fat and who has a wife. I ask you if the men one meets in society, the men one is expected to marry—are not perfectly ridiculous.

Emile Bastien dined with us to-night, and he told me that on Thursday he would bring Monsieur Hayem, a well-known *connoisseur* to see me. He owns pictures by Delacroix, Corot, and Bastien-Lepage, and he has a special gift for discovering painters who will one day be great.

The day following the one on which Bastien-Lepage exhibited the portrait of his grandfather, Hayem came to his studio

Digitized by Google

and ordered a portrait of his own father. It seems that he has a wonderfully keen scent for genius. Emile Bastien met him to-day, standing before my picture.

"What do you think of that?"

"I like it very much. Do you know the artist? Is she young?" and so forth, and so forth.

This Hayem has *followed* me since last year, when he noticed my pastel.

In short, they will come Thursday. He desires to buy something of mine.

Monday, May 12th.—After several bitterly cold days, the thermometer for the last three days has stood at 28 or 29°. It is overpowering.

I have finished a study of a little girl in a garden, in anticipation of the *connoisseur's* visit.

I forgot to say that we met Hecht on the staircase of the *Italiens*, and he was enthusiastic over my picture.

It does not make much impression on me. I have not yet achieved any wonderful success; but neither had Bastien-Lepage, when he exhibited the picture of his grandfather. Nothing makes much difference; but still, as I am to die soon, I would like—

All the symptoms seem to point to the fact that Bastien-Lepage has cancer of the stomach. It is all over with him, then. But perhaps it is a mistake. The poor fellow can not sleep. It is an outrage! And his porter probably enjoys excellent health. It is an outrage!

Thursday, May 15th.—At 10 o'clock in the morning Emile Bastien arrived with Monsieur Hayem.

Is it not queer? It does not seem to me possible. I am an artist and I have talent, real talent. And a man like this Monsieur Hayem comes to see me, and is interested in what I have done! Can it be true?

Emile Bastien is very happy over it all. He said to me, the other day: "It seems as if it were myself." The good boy

Digitized by Google

is very unhappy. I do not believe that his brother will recover.

Saturday, May 17th.—All the afternoon I walked up and down my room, happy enough, and with little shivers running up my back at the thought of the medal.

The medal is for the public. As a matter of fact, I prefer a success like mine, without a medal, to some kinds of medals.

Saturday, May 17th.—I returned home from the Bois, where I went with the Staritzky girls, who are passing through Paris, and I found Bagnisky here. He told me that at the painter Bogoluboff's they were discussing the *Salon*, and someone said that my picture resembled those of Bastien-Lepage.

On the whole, I am flattered at the talk my picture is creating. I am envied, I am slandered, I am someone, and I may be allowed to plume myself a little if I want to.

But no! Instead, I exclaim, in a heart-breaking tone: "Is it not horrible, and have I not reason to be despondent? I have passed six years—the six most beautiful years of my life—in working like a galley slave, seeing no one and enjoying nothing in life! At the end of six years I paint something good, and people dare to say that I have been helped! The reward for so much work and worry is simply calumny."

This I say, half laughingly, half seriously, stretched on a bear-skin, my arms flung carelessly over my head. My mother, however, takes it all seriously, and this worries me terribly. This is the way mamma behaves. Let us suppose that they have awarded the medal of honor to X—. Naturally, I exclaim that it is an outrage, a shame; that I am indignant, furious, etc. Mamma— "But no, no, don't get so excited! They have not given it to him; it is not true; he has not received it. And if they have given it to him, they have done so on purpose; they know your character; they know that you will be enraged, and they have done it on purpose and you allow yourself to be caught in a trap, like a little fool."

Digitized by Google

This has not really happened—it is only a prophecy; wait until X— has his medal of honor, and you will see.

Another example. The novel of that pitiful Y—, who happens to be the fashion now, has attained an enormous number of editions. Of course I am angry. You see that is what the majority devour with avidity; that is what they prefer! *Oh, tempora! Oh, mores!* Do you want to bet that mamma will not repeat her X— tirade, or something very like it. It has already happened on many occasions. She is afraid I will break to pieces or die at the least shock, and with marvelous ingenuousness she tries to preserve me by means which will end by driving me into a fever.

Let X—, Y—, or Z— call and say: "Do you know the Larochefoucauld's ball was superb?"

My face grows dark.

Mamma sees it, and five minutes later she relates, as if accidentally, something calculated to disparage the ball in my eyes—if she does not attempt to prove that it did not take place at all.

It has come to this—childish evasions and subterfuges; and it makes me foam with rage that they should think me such an idiot as to believe them.

Tuesday, May 20th.—I went to the *Salon* with Monsieur H— at 10 o'clock this morning. He says that my picture is so good that people think I must have received help.

It is atrocious!

He dares to say also that Bastien never knew how to compose a picture; that he is a portrait painter, and his pictures are portraits, and that he can do nothing with the nude. This Jew is really astonishing. He spoke of the medal and is going to interest himself about it, as he knows all the members of the committee, etc.

When we left the *Salon*, we went to Robert-Fleury's. In an excited manner I told him that I was accused of not having painted my own picture. He had not heard the report; he

Digitized by Google

said the opinion did not exist among the committee, and if any one should say such a thing he would be there to defend me. He thought me much more agitated than I really was, and came home to breakfast with us, that he might calm and console me.

"How can you let everything disturb you so? You ought to spurn such things from you, and not give them a thought."

"I would like to have some one of the committee say it before me," he added; "I would let him know what I thought of it. If any one dared to say it I would crush him."

"Thank you, Monsieur."

"No, it is not a question of friendship; I should act in that manner simply because I am defending the truth, and no one knows that better than I." He repeated something like this over and over, and said that I had a chance for the medal. Of course, he could not tell certainly, but he thought that I had a good chance.

Saturday, May 24th.—A year ago to-day it was all over, but, this year the *Salon* did not open until Tuesday; so that makes to-day correspond to May 21st of last year. To-day the first and second class medals are to be awarded; and to-morrow, the third class.

It is warm, and I am tired out.

France Illustrée has asked for permission to reproduce the picture, and a man named Lecadre has done the same. I have consented to both requests.

But they will give medals to pictures not so good as mine. There is no doubt about that. Still I do not worry much about it; real talent is bound to assert itself; but the delay is provoking. It is better not to count upon the medal. Mention was absolutely promised, but the medal is doubtful. If I do not receive it, it will be a glaring piece of injustice.

Sunday, May 25th.—What have I done since the first of May? Nothing. And why? Ah, misery! I have just come from Sèvres; it is frightful; the landscape is so changed that I can

Digitized by Google

do nothing with it. It is no longer spring. And then my apple blossoms (in the picture) had turned yellow; I used too much oil; it was stupid, but I have remedied it; we shall see. I must finish that picture at once. With the *Salon*, the newspapers, the rain, H—, and other stupid things, I have lost twenty-five days; it is a shame, but there is an end to it all now.

The medal is to be awarded to-day. It is now 4 o'clock, and the rain is falling in torrents. Last year I was sure of having it, and I was wild at the delay of positive news. This year I am not sure, but I am much calmer; a year ago I was certain of it, but I was afraid of the unexpected, and the idea of having it for a pastel was rather disagreeable. But now that I know how beautiful the pastel is, it gives me nothing but pleasure.

This year it is yes or no, without any question. If it is yes, I shall know it by 8 o'clock this evening. Meanwhile, for the next four hours, I am going to recline in the arm-chair, near the window and look out into the street.

It is twenty minutes past 5. However, I am not more wearied than when I have remained idle with nothing to expect.

And then that oil that yellowed my flowers! When I first saw it, the perspiration stood out on my forehead. Let us hope it will not be very noticeable. In two hours, I shall know. You think, perhaps, that I am very nervous. No, I tell you—not more so than when I have passed an afternoon idle and alone.

In any case, to-morrow's newspapers will tell me the result.

I am tired out with waiting. I am feverish and I have a slight headache.

Oh! I shall not have it; and it is the thought of mamma's emotion that worries me the most. I do not wish my affairs to be pried upon, nor my feelings sympathized with by any one. I suffer as if I had done something wrong. If I be

Digitized by Google

burning up, or drowning, or no matter what, others must leave me in peace. And mamma will imagine that I am suffering, and that exasperates me.

Thirty-five minutes past 7! I am called to dinner. All is over.

Monday, May 26th.—This is better. Instead of stupidly waiting, I am now indignant, and that is a sentiment which need not be concealed; it is almost refreshing. Twenty-six third-class medals were awarded yesterday, and there are six more to be awarded to-day. M— has a medal for the portrait of Julian.

Why is it that I have received no medal? For medals have been awarded to pictures comparatively bad.

Injustice? I don't care much for that excuse. It is the one most pleaded by people without brains.

They may admire my picture or not, as they please; but the fact remains that it contains seven children, grouped together, and with a background that also has some merit. Everyone whose opinion is worth anything thinks it good, or even very good; there are some who say that I could not have painted it all by myself. Even the elder Robert-Fleury, without knowing who the artist was, thought it very good. And Boulanger said to people who did not know me that he did not care for that style of painting, but nevertheless he thought this particular picture very well done and very interesting.

What, then, can it mean?

Pictures with no merit whatever have been awarded medals; I know that this has been the rule. But, on the other hand, there is no artist of talent who has not had his medals. So that there are "daubers" decorated with medals, but no man of genius without one. What then? What then? I also have eyes; my picture is a *composition.*

Suppose I had dressed those urchins in the costume of the middle ages, and painted them in a studio (which is much easier than in the open air) with a background of old tapestry?

Digitized by Google

I should then have an historical painting which would be much appreciated in Russia.

What can I believe?

Here is another request for reproduction—from Baschet, the great publisher.

It is the fifth that I have signed. What of it?

Tuesday, May 27th.—It is over. I have no medal. But it is frightfully provoking. I did not give up hope until this morning. And if you knew the things to which they have given medals!

Why am I not discouraged? Because I am so astonished, perhaps. If my picture is good, why did it not receive a prize?

Intrigues, they will say.

That is all very well; but still, if my picture is good, why did it not receive a prize? I do not wish to set myself up as a guileless child, who does not know there are such things as intrigues; but yet when a picture is good—

Then it must have been bad? No, that can not be.

I have eyes, even in judging my own works—and then the others! And the forty newspapers!

Thursday, May 29th.—I have had a fever all night, and I am frightfully irritated and wildly nervous. It is not the medal alone, but that combined with a sleepless night.

I am so unhappy! I long to believe in God. Is it not natural to seek for some miraculous power that can help you, when all is wretchedness and misery, and there is no loop-hole of escape anywhere?

One tries to believe in an Omnipotent Being, Whom one has only to appeal to, to be heard, and Whom one can address without fear of humiliation or coldness. Then one has resort to prayer. The doctors are powerless, and we ask for a miracle, which does not happen; but while we are asking and expecting it, we are somewhat consoled. It does not amount to much. God can be only a just God; but if He is just, why does He allow things to be as they are?

Digitized by Google

A second's reflection, alas! is all that is required to destroy our belief. What is the use of living? What is the use of dragging on such a miserable existence? Death presents this advantage, at least—it is a means of finding what this famous future life really is; that is, if there is any future life at all.

Friday, May 30th.—I think that I am very stupid not to devote myself seriously to the only thing that is worth the trouble—the only thing that gives happiness and makes all sorrows fade away: Love—yes, love, of course. Two beings who love each other, believe each other to be morally and physically perfect—morally especially! A being who loves you is just, good, loyal, generous, and ready in the simplest manner to perform the most heroic deeds.

Two beings who love each other believe in a wonderful and perfect universe, such as philosophers, like Aristotle and I, have dreamed of; and that is, I think, the great attraction of love.

In our relations with our family, our friends, our acquaintances, we discover indications of the sordid side of humanity. Here, there is a suspicion of avarice or of stupidity; there, there is a hint of lowness, envy, or injustice; in short, our best friend has his thoughts which he never tells to us, and, as Maupassant says, man is always *alone*, for it is impossible for him to penetrate the thoughts of his best friend, even in the most confidential moments.

Well, love accomplishes the miracle of the mingling of souls. It is an illusion, of course, but what matters that? *That which we believe to exist, does exist!* I tell you so myself. Love makes the world appear to be what it ought to be. If I were God—

Well, what then?

Saturday, May 31st.—Villevieille has told me that I did not receive a medal because of the fuss I made about last year's mention, and because I spoke publicly of the committee as idiots. It is true that I did say that.

Digitized by Google

My picture is not, perhaps, very large or very striking; but if it were, the "Meeting" would be a masterpiece. Are masterpieces necessary for little third-class medals? Baude's engraving has appeared with an article in which it is stated that the public is disappointed that I have not received a medal. My painting is dry? But they say the same thing of Bastien.

Are there in this world people capable of saying that M—'s portrait is better than my picture? Monsieur Bastien-Lepage had eight votes for his "Joan of Arc." Monsieur M— has a medal. Yes, the immense M— had twenty-eight votes, exactly twenty more than I. There is neither conscience nor justice in the world. What must I believe? I am completely bewildered.

I went down-stairs when H— came, to show the Jew that I am not cast down.

I appeared so satisfied and so haughty, and talked so unconcernedly of photographs, engravers, purchasers, etc., that the son of Israel finally decided that he would like to do business with me, although I had no medal. "I will buy your pastel ("Armandine") and the head of the laughing baby." Two! He arranged the matter with Dina, but we sent him to Emile Eastien to settle the price. I am very well satisfied.

Sunday, June 1st.—I have done nothing for a month past! Yes, I began to read Sully-Prudhomme yesterday morning. I have two of his books, and I like them very much.

I care but little for versification. When the verses are bad, they displease me; but otherwise I think only of the idea expressed. If people want to rhyme, let them do so; but they must not make the rhyme obtrusive. Sully-Prudhomme's ideas are what greatly pleased me. There is in his poetry an elevation of style, an elegance of diction, and a subtle, fine reasoning, which are entirely in harmony with my own way of thinking.

I read, sometimes lying upon the divan and sometimes walking up and down on the balcony, the preface to Lucrèce

Digitized by Google

and the book itself, "*De Natura Rerum.*" Those who know the book will be able to understand me.

To understand everything in this book demands the closest attention. It must be difficult reading, even for those who are accustomed to grapple this subject. I understood it all; at times the meaning escaped me, but I read the lines over and over until I forced myself to comprehend them. I am obliged to feel a great respect for Sully-Prudhomme, because he has written things which were so difficult for me to understand.

The handling of ideas is as familiar to him as the handling of colors is to me.

Then he ought to have a deep veneration for me, too, because with a few "muddy colors," as the unsympathetic Théophile Gautier says, I make faces which express human sentiments, and pictures in which are seen nature, trees, atmosphere, distance. He probably thinks himself a thousand times superior to a painter, because he rummages in the mechanism of human thought. What does that teach him or others? It teaches how the mind works, perhaps, by giving names to all the swift, elusive processes of the intellect. To poor, ignorant me, it seems that this subtle philosophy will teach nothing to any one. It is a research, a delicate and difficult amusement; but what is the use of it all? Will learning to give names to these abstract and marvelous things form great geniuses, and make them write, think, and rule this universe?

"And then man," he says, "can know an object only so far as he comes in direct communication with it." The greater part of those who read this book will not understand what this means, but I will make one more quotation: "Our science, therefore, can not exceed the knowledge of our categories applied to our perceptions." Good! We evidently can not understand more than we can understand. There can be no doubt about that.

If I had had a systematic education, I should have been a very remarkable woman. Everything I know I have learned

Digitized by Google

myself. I drew up, myself, the plan of my studies at Nice with the professors of the Lyceum, who never ceased wondering at it. In drawing it up, I was guided half by intuition and half by what I had read. I wished to know such and such a thing. Since then I have read the Greek and Latin authors, the French and English classics, contemporaneous writers—in fact, everything I possibly could.

But it is a chaos; although, through my natural love of harmony, I have endeavored to reduce my knowledge to some sort of order.

What is there in this man, Sully-Prudhomme? Six months ago I bought his books, and, after trying to read them, I cast them aside as pleasant verses; but to-day I discover things in them that have captivated me, and I have read on and on, impelled to do so by François Coppée's visit. And yet neither Coppée nor anyone else spoke of him; then what connection is there in my mind between them, and why?

It is evident that with a great effort I could make a philosophical analysis of this intellectual work. But why should I? Would that change in the slightest degree my opinions?

Thursday, June 5th.—Prater is dead. He had grown up with me; they bought him for me in Vienna in 1870; he was three weeks old at the time, and he used to rummage about behind the trunks among the paper wrappings of the purchases we had made.

He was my faithful and devoted dog, whining when I went out and waiting for hours at the window for my return. Then at Rome I took a fancy to another dog, and mamma took Prater; but he was always very jealous of my affections. Ah! when I think of his tawny, lion-like hide and his beautiful eyes, I am ashamed of my own heartlessness.

The new dog was called Pincio, and he was stolen from me in Paris. Instead of returning to Prater, who would not be consoled, I was stupid enough to have Coco I., and the present Coco. It was mean and unworthy of me. For four years

Digitized by Google

these two animals were ready to devour each other; and finally we had to shut Prater up in an attic chamber, where he lived like a prisoner, while Coco trampled upon people and things as he chose. He died of old age. Yesterday I spent a couple of hours with him; he dragged himself up to me and put his head on my knee.

Ah! I am a fine creature, with my affectionate sentiments. Contemptible character! I weep as I write, and I think that the traces of my tears will give me a reputation for being kind-hearted with those who read me. I always intended to take back the poor beast; but I limited myself to giving him a lump of sugar, or a caress, as I passed him by. You ought to have seen his tail then; it went round and round like a spinning-wheel.

After all, he is not yet dead. I thought he was, because I no longer saw him in his room; he had hidden himself behind a trunk or a bath-tub, as he used to do in Vienna, and I thought that they had taken him away, not daring to tell me the truth. But he can not live over twenty-four hours.

Robert-Fleury found me in tears; he had come in reply to a letter from me asking him something about the reproductions of my picture. It appears that I had neglected to sign a little paper by which others could be prevented from reproducing my picture, and so involving me in a lawsuit. You must know that I am very proud of all these requests for authority to reproduce the picture, and I should be proud even of a lawsuit.

Friday, June 6th.—The *soirée* at the embassy has been occupying my thoughts considerably, and I am afraid something will happen to spoil my enjoyment. I can never believe that there is anything pleasant in store for me. However promising everything may seem, some unforeseen obstacle always prevents the realization of my hopes. How long I have bewailed this fact!

We went to the *Salon* to-day—I in order to see the picture

Digitized by Google

which had received the medal. We met Robert-Fleury there; and, as we stood looking at one of the pictures which had received a second medal, I asked him what he would say to me if I should bring him a picture painted like that.

"In the first place," he replied, seriously, "I hope that you will take care never to paint like that."

"But it has a second medal."

"Well, the painter is a fellow who has exhibited for a long time, and then—you understand."

What a mass of mediocrities! It was positively saddening.

The pictures which received medals are not absolutely outrageous, but simply common-place and poor.

On the whole, this year's exhibition is anything but one to be proud of.

Saturday, June 7th.—We are preparing in silence for this evening's solemnity.

My gown is of white silk mull. The corsage is formed of two draperies, crossed and knotted on the shoulders. The sleeves are short and trimmed with bows of the mull. There is a wide, white sash with long, floating ends. The skirt is made with a drapery from left to right falling to the feet. Behind are two breadths of the mull, one touching the ground; the other, shorter. My slippers are white. My hair will be arranged in a Psyche knot and with no ornament. The whole effect will be charming. I think the gown is exceedingly graceful. The drapery in front is a dream. It is so simple and elegant that I shall certainly look very pretty in it. Mamma will wear black damask, with a long train and diamonds.

Sunday, June 8th.—I looked as well as possible—as well as I have ever done. The gown produced a charming effect, and I was as fresh and blooming as I used to be in Rome or Nice.

The people who have been in the habit of seeing me every day gazed at me in astonishment.

Digitized by Google

We arrived at the ball somewhat late. Madame Fridericks was not near the ambassadress, with whom mamma exchanged a few words. There were plenty of people we knew. Madame d 'A—whom I met at the Gavini's, and who did not bow to me then, to-night bowed to me very pleasantly. I took the arm of Gavini, who looked very well with his ribbons and stars; he presented Menabrea, the Italian minister, to me, and we talked art. Then Monsieur de Lesseps told me long stories of his children and their nurses, and the shares of the Suez Canal. We remained together for a long time. Chevreau was with us.

As for the *chargés d'affaires* and the *attachés* of the embassies, I neglected them to talk to the old men with their breasts covered with decorations.

A little later, having duly sacrificed at the altar of fame, I talked with all the painters that were there; they were all very curious about me and asked to be presented. But I was so pretty and so well dressed that they will be convinced that I did not paint my pictures by myself. There were Chremetieff, Lehman, a very sympathetic old man with some talent, and Edelfeldt, who has considerable talent, and who is a handsome, rather vulgar young man—a Russian from Finland. On the whole, it was very pleasant. You see the chief thing is to be pretty; everything depends upon that.

Tuesday, June 10th.—How interesting the streets are! The faces of the passers-by, the peculiarities of each one, and the glimpses we catch of the hearts of people who are strangers to us—to endow all these with life, or rather, to picture the life of each one! We paint, with the aid of Parisian models, a combat of Roman gladiators, which we have never seen. Why not paint the strugglers of Paris from the life? In five or six centuries it will be an antique, and the imbeciles of those days will regard it with veneration.

Saturday, June 14th.—It was mamma's reception day to-day and we had many callers. I wore a very elegant gown, of

Digitized by Google

gray taffeta with a white mull vest, made in the Louis XVI. style.

I went to Sèvres and took a model with me, but I did not stay long. A professional model is not like a real country girl, and the next time I go I shall take our chambermaid. This Armandine will never do; it is too easy to be seen that she has danced at the Eden Theatre.

And I, who pretend to paint the people as they really are, would have depicted a little *danseuse* dressed up as a peasant. I want a great stupid girl, whom the first peasant that came along could take advantage of. However, Armandine was ideally stupid; I made her talk.

When stupidity does not irritate me, it amuses me; I listen to it with a pitying curiosity, and then I learn the manners and customs of the lower classes, I fill out the hints I obtain with my own intuition, which, if you will allow me to say so, is really remarkable.

Monday, June 16th.—This evening we went to see Sarah Bernhardt in "Macbeth" (Richepin's translation). The Gavinis went with us.

I go so rarely to the theatre that I greatly enjoyed it. But the declamatory style of the actors offended my artistic sense. How much better would it be if they would speak naturally!

Marais (*Macbeth*) was good in spots, but his intonation was at times so false and theatrical that it was painful to listen to him. Sarah was admirable, as she always is, although her voice has lost something of its silvery cadence.

Tuesday, June 17th.—My picture drives me wild, and the hands are still to be done. The sleeping peasant girl, the blossoming apple tree, and the violets no longer interest me. A canvas three feet square would have been quite large enough for it, and I have made it life-size. It is good for nothing. Three months thrown away!

Wednesday, June 18th.—I have been at Sèvres all day. What torments me is that I have feverish attacks every day.

Digitized by Google

I can not seem to grow fat, and yet I drink six or seven glasses of goat's milk a day.

Friday, June 20th.—The architect has written to me from Algiers. At the end of my letter to him I drew our three likenesses, each with a medal about the neck; Jules with the medal of honor, I a first medal, and the architect a second, for next year. I also sent him a photograph of the "Meeting;" and he answered me that he showed all to his brother, who was very glad to have an idea of the picture, of which so much had been said to him. He thought it very good, and he exclaimed:

"How stupid they were not to have given a medal to this picture, which seems to me very good, indeed!"

He wished very much that he was able to write to me, but it was impossible, he suffers so much; but in spite of his suffering he has decided to start for home a week from to-day. He told the architect to send me his kindest regards, and to thank me for the embroidery.

A year ago, I should have been overjoyed at this.

He wished that he was able to write to me. I am pleased at this only—retrospectively; for, at present, the whole affair is almost indifferent to me.

At the bottom of the letter is my head, with the medal of honor for 1886.

He must have been touched by the manner in which I sought to console his brother in my letter; the letter began seriously with comforting words, and ended with pleasantries, which is my usual way.

Wednesday, June 25th.—Read over the pages of my journal for 1875, 1876, and 1877. I complain there of I know what; everywhere are aspirations toward the indefinite. Every evening I was wounded and discouraged, longing furiously and desperately to find something to do. Should I go to Italy? Remain in Paris? Marry? Paint? What should I do? If I went to Italy, I should not be in Paris, and I had a

Digitized by Google

thirst to be everywhere at once. What wasted energy was there!

If I had been a man, I would have conquered Europe; being a young girl, I exhausted my strength in exaggerated language and eccentric follies. Misery!

There are moments when we ingenuously believe ourselves to be capable of anything. "If I only had time, I would be a sculptor, a writer, a musician." An inward fire was and is devouring me. And death is the inevitable end of all things, whether I consume myself with vain longings or not.

But if I am nothing, if I never shall be anything, why did I have those dreams of fame ever since I can remember? Why did I have those wild aspirations after greatness, which appeared to my early imagination in the guise of rank and wealth?

Why, since I was first able to think, since I was four years old, did I have vague but tremendous longings for glory and splendor?

In my childish brain I imagined myself to be all sorts of things. First I was a dancer, a famous dancer, whom St. Petersburg adored. Every evening I would make them put a low-necked dress on me, with flowers in my hair, and I would dance in the *Salon*, very grave and serious, while every one in the house looked on. Then, I was the first singer in the world. I sang and accompanied myself on the harp, and I was borne in triumph, I don't know where or by whom. Then I electrified the masses by my eloquence. The Emperor of Russia married me in order to keep himself on the throne; I lived in direct communication with my people; I made speeches to them explaining my policy, and both people and sovereign were moved to tears. And then I fell in love. The man I loved was false to me, or, if he were not false to me, he was killed by some accident—generally, a fall from a horse just at the moment I was beginning to feel I loved him less than before; then I loved another. But all my love affairs were

Digitized by Google

very moral ones; my lovers either died or were false to me. I consoled myself for my dead lovers; but when my lovers were false to me, I became desperate and miserable, and finally died.

In short, in everything, in all the ramifications of all human pleasures and feelings, my dreams have been greater than the reality; and, if they are never to be realized, it is better to die.

Why was my picture not awarded a medal?

The medal! It must be that some of them thought I had received assistance. It has already happened that medals have been given to women who had been helped in their work; and when a medal has once been given, the recipient has the right to be admitted to the next year's *Salon*, and may send the most worthless thing imaginable.

And I, young, elegant, and praised by the papers! All these people are the same. Breslau, for example; she told my model that I would paint much better if I went less to balls. They all imagine that I go every evening into society. How deceitful appearances are! But to suppose that my picture was not my own, that is too serious; they have not said it publicly; would to heaven they had! Tony Robert-Fleury told me that he was astonished at the result; for every time he spoke of me to his colleagues of the committee, they answered him: "It is very good; it is a very interesting thing."

"What do you suppose they meant when they said that?" asked Robert-Fleury.

Then *it is* this doubt—

Friday, June 27th.—Just as we were starting for a drive in the Bois the architect appeared near the carriage. They arrived this morning, and he had come to tell us that Jules was a little better; that he had borne his journey well, but that unfortunately he could not go out. He would have had so much pleasure in telling me how greatly my picture had been admired by every one to whom he had shown the photograph in Algiers.

Digitized by Google

Then we will go and see him to-morrow," said mamma.

"You could not give him a greater pleasure; he has said that your picture— But no, he will tell it to you himself; that will be better."

Saturday, June 28th.—We went, therefore, to the Rue Legendre.

As we entered, he rose and took a few steps forward to meet us; it seemed to me that he was ashamed to let us see how changed he was.

He is changed—oh, very much changed; but it is not his stomach that is the trouble. I am no physician, but his looks are enough to prove that.

In short, I found him so changed that all I said to him was:

"Well! have you come back?"

He was not at all reserved, but kind and friendly. He spoke very flatteringly of my picture, repeating to me constantly not to trouble myself about the medal; that my success was enough.

I made him laugh, telling him his illness would do him good, as he was beginning to grow stout. The architect seemed delighted to see the invalid so gay and pleasant. And thus encouraged, I grew talkative. He paid me many compliments on my gown, and even on the handle of my parasol. He made me sit down at his feet on the reclining-chair. His poor legs were so thin, his eyes were larger and very bright, and his hair was uncared for.

But he is very interesting, and since he has asked me to do so, I shall go and see him again.

The architect, who accompanied us down-stairs, also asked me to do so. "It gives Jules so much pleasure, and he is so happy to see you; he says that you have much talent, I assure you." I write all this about the reception I met with, because it has pleased me very much.

But the feeling I have for him is maternal, calm, and tender, and I am proud of it. I am sure that he will recover.

Digitized by Google

Monday, June 30th.—I came very near cutting my painting to pieces to-day. There is not a bit of it as I would like to have it.

There is still one of the hands to be done; but when that hand is finished, there is so much to be done over again! Oh, misery!

And three months, three months I have wasted on it!

I have amused myself by arranging a magnificent basket of strawberries. I gathered them myself, putting in a few green ones for the sake of the color.

And such leaves! In short, marvelous strawberries, gathered by an artist with the delicacy and coquetry of one engaged in an unaccustomed occupation.

And with them I put a whole branch of red gooseberries.

I walked with them through the streets of Sèvres, and I held the basket upon my knees in the tramway, taking care to hold it up a little so that the air might pass all about it and the heat not spoil the strawberries—not one of which had a spot or blemish upon it.

Rosalie laughed at me.

"If anyone at home should see you, Mademoiselle!"

Is it possible? But I do it for the sake of his painting, which deserves it; not for his face, which does not. But his painting deserves every consideration.

Then, I suppose that it is his painting that will eat the strawberries?

Tuesday, July 1st.—Still that odious Sèvres! But I returned in good time, before 5 o'clock. My picture is almost finished.

But I am terribly depressed; everything goes wrong with me.

I need some great distraction.

And I, who do not believe in God, have fixed my hopes upon God.

It used to be the case that, after days of frightful suffering, something would happen to restore my spirits.

Digitized by Google

My God, why do You permit me to reason? I would so much prefer to blindly believe.

I believe or I do not believe. When I reason I can not believe; but in moments of utter misery or of great joy, at the bottom of my heart my first thought is always of that God Who is so harsh to me!

Wednesday, July 2d.—We have been to see Bastien-Lepage, in his studio this time, and it seems to me that he is better. His mother was there. She is much better looking than her portrait—a woman of sixty, who appears forty-five or fifty. Her hair is light and very pretty, only slightly streaked with gray; she has a pleasant smile, is very agreeable, and looked very well in her black and white gown; she embroiders very prettily in designs of her own invention.

Bastien-Lepage has two front teeth quite wide apart, just as I have.

Thursday, July 3d.—This morning at 7 o'clock I went to see Potain. He made a very slight examination, and ordered me to the *Eaux-Bonnes*. After that, we shall see. He gave me a letter to his colleague at the *Eaux*, which I opened and read. He says in it that there is a hole on the top of the right lung, and that I am the most undisciplined and most imprudent patient in the world.

Then, as it was not 8 o'clock, I went to the little doctor in the Rue de l'Echiquier. He appears to me like a serious fellow; for he seemed disagreeably surprised at my condition, and insisted very strongly that I should go to one of the princes of medical science, Bouchard or Grancher.

As I refused, he said that he would accompany me if I would go. Then I consented.

Potain pretends that I have been much worse than I am; that my condition for a time was wonderfully improved; that now I am worse again, but that there is no immediate danger. He is such an optimist that I must be very ill.

Little B— does not share his opinion; he says that I have

Digitized by Google

been worse, indeed, but that the disease was acute, and it was feared that it would progress very rapidly, which, however, has not happened; and that is what Potain meant by my being wonderfully improved, while now the disease is aggravated and chronic. In short, I absolutely must go and consult Grancher.

I will go.

Bah! you consumptive!

Taking everything altogether, it is far from being a jesting matter. And there is not the least glimmer of sunshine to console me a little.

Friday, July 4th.—The Sèvres picture is here in the studio. It might be called April; but the name is immaterial to me, for it seems to me very poor.

The background is of a vivid and dirty green.

The woman is not at all what I wished—not at all.

I hurried to finish it, and the sentiment is by no means what I had imagined. In short, more than three months have been thrown away.

Saturday, July 5th.—I have a charming gown of gray cloth, the waist made like an artist's blouse, with no trimming except some lace at the neck and wrists. To wear with it I have an ideal hat with a large knot of old lace. I was very anxious, as I looked so well in it, to go to the Rue Legendre; only I was afraid I had been there too often; and yet, why so? I ought to be able to go there as a friend and a good comrade, since he is very ill.

At all events, we did go. His mother was delighted, patted me on the shoulder, and spoke of my beautiful hair. The architect was stupid, as he has been ever since his monument was completed, and the great painter is better.

He ate his soup and his egg before us; his mother ran and brought him everything, in order that the domestic should not be obliged to appear. He found it all very natural, and calmly accepted our services; he is never astonished at any-

Digitized by Google

thing. In speaking of his looks, someone said that he ought to have his hair cut, and mamma related how she used to cut her son's hair when he was a little boy, and also her father's, when he was ill.

"Do you want me to cut yours? It may bring you luck." Everybody laughed, but he consented at once; his mother brought a wrapper, and mamma proceeded to put her offer into operation, accomplishing her task with great credit.

I wanted also to use the scissors, but the naughty boy said that I would be awkward about it, and I revenged myself by an allusion to Samson and Delilah.

My next picture!

At this he condescended to laugh.

His brother, emboldened by this, now proposed to trim his beard also, and did so, his hands trembling a little.

That transformed his whole face, and he no longer looked ill and changed. His mother uttered an exclamation of joy. "I see him again—my boy, my dear little boy, my dear child!"

What a good woman she is, so simple, kind, and full of adoration for her celebrated son!

They are worthy people.

Monday, July 14th.—I have commenced the treatment which is going to cure me; and I am quite calm.

My painting is progressing more favorably.

The people on the Boulevard des Batignolles, and even on the Avenue Wagram, furnish good subjects.

Have you ever noticed the streets and the passers-by?

What a romance—what a drama one of those benches contains! The broken-down outcast with his shifting look, one arm thrown over the back of the bench, and the other resting on his knee; the woman with the child upon her lap; the woman of the people who is working; the grocer's boy, who is reading a cheap newspaper; the sleeping workman; the philosopher, and the desperate man who is smoking. Per-

Digitized by Google

haps I see too many things; and yet, look yourself some time about 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening.

It is all there, all there, all there!

It seems to me that I have found a subject. Yes, yes, yes, yes! I shall not do it, perhaps, but my mind is at rest.

But there are moments which are so different! Sometimes one sees absolutely *nothing* in life, and sometimes— I begin to love everything about me. It is like a flood of life taking possession of my soul.

And yet, perhaps, there is not much to rejoice at.

Ah! never mind; I will find a gay and pleasant side, even in the thought of my death. I was made to be happy, but

"Pourquoi dans ton œuvre céleste,
Tant d'éléments si peu d'accord?"

Tuesday, July 15th.—I have returned to an old project, one which takes complete possession of me every time that I see the people upon the public benches. It might make a magnificent picture. It is much better to always paint scenes or figures which are motionless. Understand me, I am not opposed to action; but in violent scenes there can be no illusion or pleasure for the cultivated spectator. Without realizing it, one is painfully impressed by that arm raised to strike, and which does not strike; by those legs which are in the position of running, and which remain in the same place. There are situations full of action, and yet where one can imagine an *immovability* of a few seconds.

That moment should always be seized which follows a great action or some violent deed, rather than the one which precedes it. The "Joan of Arc" of Bastien-Lepage has heard the voices; she has started forward, overturning her spinning-wheel, and has stopped short with her back against a tree. But take scenes where arms are raised in the air, and people are *acting;* they are, perhaps, very well done, but they never give complete enjoyment.

Digitized by Google

On the other hand, take "The Distribution of Flags by the Emperor," which is at Versailles.

Everyone is rushing forward, and the arms are raised, it is true, but yet it is a fine picture, because the arms are *waiting* for something. One is moved and carried away by the emotion of the men, and one shares their impatience. The spirit and action of the picture are immense, precisely because one can imagine an instant's pause, during which one can reasonably regard the scene as a real thing, and not as a picture.

Nothing can equal the grandeur of subjects in repose, either in sculpture or painting.

A man of mediocre talent can execute well enough a scene which is full of movement, but he can make nothing of a subject in repose.

See the pictures of Millet, and compare them to any scene of violence you choose,

See the "Moses" of Michael Angelo. It is motionless, but it is *living*. His "Penseroso" does not move—does not speak, but it is because he does not wish to. He is a *living* man, who is absorbed by his thoughts.

The "*Pas-Mêche*" of Bastien-Lepage looks at you, and listens to you, and he will speak presently, for he is living. In his "Haymaking," the man lying upon his back, with his face covered by his hat, is asleep; but he is alive. The seated woman is buried in reflection and does not move; but one feels that she is living.

A subject in repose can alone give complete enjoyment. It gives one a chance to become absorbed in it—to realize its life.

Fools and ignoramuses think that such a subject is easier to do. Ah, misery!

If I ever die, it will be from indignation at the infinite stupidity of the human race, as Flaubert says.

Thirty years ago wonderful things were written in Russia.

Digitized by Google

While reading "Peace and War," by Count Tolstoï, I was so moved that I exclaimed: "Why, it is like Zola!"

It is true that to-day there is an essay on our Tolstoï in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, and my Russian heart bounds with pride and joy. This essay is by Monsieur de Vogüé, who was formerly Secretary of the Embassy in Russia, who has made a study of the literature and manners of the country, and who has already published many remarkably just and clever articles upon my great and wonderful native land.

And you, miserable being! you live in France; you prefer to be a foreigner, rather than remain at home. Since you love your beautiful, great, and sublime Russia, go there and work for her.

But I also work for the glory of my country, although I may never develop so great a talent as Tolstoï's.

If I had not my painting, I *would* go there; upon my word of honor, I would go! But my work absorbs me and leaves me no room for anything else.

Monday, July 21st.—I walked about to-day for more than four hours, trying to find a background for my picture. I have decided on the street, on an outer boulevard even, but I must make my choice there.

It is evident that a public bench upon an outer boulevard has a very different character from a bench of the Champs Elysées, where are seated only porters, grooms, nurses, and dudes.

In the latter case there is no subject for a picture—no soul, no dramatic feeling. They are marionettes, except in a few exceptional cases. But what poetry there is in the outcast on the other bench. There the man is real; he is like a character of Shakspeare's.

And now I am wildly uneasy for fear I shall be unable to grasp the treasure I have discovered! Suppose I should not be able to do it; suppose the weather should prevent; suppose—

Digitized by Google

Listen! If I have no talent, heaven is mocking me, for it inflicts upon me all the tortures of artists of genius. Alas!

Wednesday, July 23d.—My picture is outlined and the models are found. I have been running about since 5 o'clock in the morning at La Villette and at the Batignolles; Rosalie accosted the people I pointed out to her.

Ah! you can well believe, it was neither easy nor pleasant.

Friday, August 1st.—When I use tender words do not take them too literally.

Of the two *egos* which struggle with one another, one says to the other: "Well, feel something, then, if you choose!" And the other who tries to be tender is always dominated by the first, by the *ego spectator* who is there looking on, and absorbs the other.

And will it always be like that?

How about love?

Well, you know, it seems to me that love is impossible when one contemplates human nature through a microscope. Those who do not are very happy, for they see only what they must.

Do you want me to tell you the truth? Well, then, I am neither a painter, nor a sculptor, nor a musician, nor a woman, nor a girl, nor a friend. All things, with me, are reduced to subjects for observation, reflection, and analysis.

A look, a figure, a sound, a joy, a sorrow—everything is immediately weighed, examined, verified, classified, noted; and when I have spoken or written the results, I am satisfied.

Saturday, August 2d.—Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday—five days. I have finished my picture. Claire and I commenced the same day the same subject, upon a canvas 3½ feet wide by about 3 feet high—a large picture, you see. The subject is taken from the poem of "The Beaver," by Hugo—a farm in the background and on the edge of the water is seated a young girl who is speaking to a boy across the river.

Digitized by Google

Is what I have done very good? It is not possible, for the sentiment of the picture is somewhat common-place, and then I hurried it. It is so queer; someone says: "That corner there is very pretty." Then another: "That is worth nothing." And still another: "It is very good—a very pretty picture!" Claire has not finished her picture yet.

I would like to tell you what I wonder at most in the world.

I wonder at people who dare to make observations.

I wonder at people who see that I am working and who joggle my elbow for fun, without really meaning any harm.

When I see Angèlique sewing, I feel a sort of respect for her; the idea would never come to me to amuse myself in that way.

How should I dare—in short, it is incomprehensible.

But, great heavens, there are some things which shock me! Almost all true artists, all those who work, are like me.

I also wonder at people who eat great pieces of mutton, composed of fat and blood.

I wonder at those fortunate people who enjoy eating raspberries without thinking of the little worms that are almost invariably to be found inside of them. I turn them inside out, so that the trouble I have to take, spoils all my pleasure.

I also wonder at those who can eat all sorts of hashed and messed-up dishes, without knowing what they are made of.

I wonder at, or rather I envy simple, healthy, and *ordinary* natures.

Thursday, August 7th.—Friday, August 8th.—Saturday, August 9th.—The ladies of my family took a little ice-box to the Rue Legendre. He wanted to have one that could be placed near the bed.

I hope he does not think that we are attentive to him in the hopes of wringing a picture out of him.

My picture is sketched in colors, but I do not feel much confidence in it.

I am obliged to lie down and rest very often, and every

Digitized by Google

time I rise, my head is dizzy, and for a few seconds I can see nothing. It became so bad, finally, that I left my work about 5 o'clock, and went and rambled about in the deserted paths of the Bois.

Monday, August 11th.—I went out at 5 o'clock in the morning to sketch, but even at that early hour there were so many people about that I was obliged to return home, furious. There was a crowd about the cab, although the windows were drawn up.

In the afternoon I went again into the streets, with no better success. Then I went to the Bois.

Tuesday, August 12th.—In short, my friends, everything points to the fact that I am ill. I drag myself about and I struggle against the feeling; but this morning I thought I should be obliged to give up, that is, go to bed and do nothing more. Then, suddenly, a little strength returned to me and I went out once more to seek details for my picture. My weakness and my preoccupation separate me from the real world; never have I understood things with such clearness—a clearness far beyond that with which I am usually blessed.

Everything appears to me in detail and with a transparency which is saddening.

I, a foreigner, young and ignorant, criticise the poorly-turned phrases of the greatest writers and the stupid ebullitions of the most celebrated poets. As for the newspapers, I can not read three lines without becoming disgusted. Not only because the language is vulgar, but because of the ideas advanced; there is nothing true in them; every word is written through expediency or is paid for.

There is no truth, no sincerity anywhere.

Just think of *honorable men*, in obedience to party spirit, uttering lies or stupidities which they can not really believe! It is shocking!

We returned to dinner after a call on Bastien, who is still in bed, but with a calm face and clear eyes. He has gray

Digitized by Google

eyes, whose wonderful beauty naturally escapes the multitude. Do you understand me? Eyes which saw first in imagination "Joan of Arc."

We spoke of that picture, by the way, and he complained of not being sufficiently appreciated. I told him that he was appreciated by all those who are not brutes, and that "Joan of Arc" is a work which people admired more than they dared to say to his face.

Saturday, August 16th.—This is the first day I have accomplished anything in the cab, and I came home with such a pain in my back that I was obliged to have it bathed.

But how well I feel now! The architect put my canvas in place this morning. His brother is better and he has been to the Bois. They carried him up and down stairs in an easy-chair. Felix told me this when he came for some milk at 4 o'clock this afternoon.

For the last week he has been drinking goat's milk, the milk of our goat; you can imagine the delight of my people. But that is not all; he deigns to be so friendly that he sends for milk when he wants it. It is charming.

We shall lose him soon, however, as he is getting better. Yes, the pleasant times are drawing to a close. We can not visit a man who is well enough to go out.

But I must not exaggerate. He has been to the Bois, but he was carried in an arm-chair and he went back to bed immediately after it.

That scarcely means that he is well enough to go out.

Tuesday, August 19th.—I was so worn out that I had scarcely strength enough to put on a linen gown without corsets and go to see Bastien. His mother received us with reproaches. Three days! Three days without coming! Why it is horrible! And when we entered the chamber, Emile exclaimed: "What, is it all over, then? What, no more friendship?" Then *he himself* said: "Are you going to desert me? That is not kind."

Digitized by Google

My vanity tempts me to repeat here all the friendly reproaches he addressed to us, and the assurances that never, never could we come too often.

Thursday, August 21st.—I have been idling all day, and worked only from 5 to 7 in the morning, as I drove about in a carriage.

I have had a photograph taken of the spot I am painting, so that I may have the lines of the sidewalk correct.

This was done at 7 this morning. The architect arrived at 6, and afterward we drove home—I, Rosalie, the architect, Coco, and the photograph.

It was not that the presence of his brother was useful to me, but it made it pleasanter; I like very much to have a little staff of honor about me.

Friday, August 22d.—All is over! He is doomed.

Baude, who passed the evening here with the architect, told mamma about it.

Baude is his great friend; he is the one to whom he wrote a long letter from Algeria; the one which I read.

All is over, then!

Can it be possible?

I can not yet realize the effect which this abominable piece of news will have upon me.

It is a new sensation: to see a man condemned to death.

Tuesday, August 26th.—All the confused thoughts which have filled my brain are now grouped and settled about this one black point.

It is a new experience, a case I never met with before; a man—a man, a great artist, and—well, you know what.

Sentenced to death!

Ah! how terrible it is!

And I must think every day that he is going to die! It is horrible!

I have gathered together all my strength and, with head erect, I await the blow.

Digitized by Google

Has it not been thus with me all my life?

When a blow is impending, I await it with fortitude; but when all is over, I reason, I rebel, and I utter complaints.

I can not put two words together coherently.

But do not think I am overwhelmed with grief; I am simply absorbed by the thought of what is going to become of me.

Saturday, August 30th.—The matter is very serious. I can do nothing, and I have done nothing since the Sèvres picture was finished—nothing except two miserable panels.

I sleep for whole hours in broad daylight. I have made, indeed, my little study in a cab; but that amounts to nothing.

The canvas is there; everything is ready, and I alone am lacking.

If I were to say all! The terrible fears—

It is almost September and the winter is close at hand.

The slightest cold might confine me to my bed for two months, and then my convalescence would make me waste still more time.

And my picture? I would have sacrificed everything, and—

Ah! this is the moment to believe in God and to pray to Him.

Yes, it is the fear of falling ill that overwhelms me; in my present condition, if I should take cold, an illness of six weeks would carry me off.

And yet that is the way I am certain to go.

I shall work at my picture in any case, however cold it may be; and if I do not catch cold while working, I shall while walking. And yet there are people who do not paint pictures and who die all the same.

This, then, is the end of all my troubles! So many aspirations, so many desires, so many plans, so many—to die at twenty-four, on the threshold of everything!

I had foreseen it all. Since God could not, without partiality, grant me everything that was necessary to my life,

Digitized by Google

He will give me death. There are so many years, so many? I have had so few, and the end is nothingness!

Wednesday, September 3d.—I am doing the drawing for *Figaro*, but stopping to rest every now and then, for an hour at a time. I have a terrible fever. My strength is gone. I have never been so ill; but I do not say so. I continue to go out and to work. What is the use of saying anything about it? I am ill, and that is enough. Will talking about it do any good? But should I go out?

Mine is a disease that permits my doing so at the times when I feel comparatively well.

Thursday, September 11th.—I commenced Thursday the study of a nude child. It may serve as a subject for a picture, if it is good.

The architect came yesterday; his brother wanted to know why we had neglected him for so long a time. We therefore went to the Bois late this afternoon; he was taking his usual airing, and you can judge of the surprise of all at finding us there. He held out both his hands to me, and when we were going home he entered our carriage, while my aunt returned with his mother. It would be well to go to the Bois whenever we know that he is there.

Saturday, September 13th.—We are friends, he likes us; he respects me, he likes me, he is interested in me. He said yesterday that I was wrong to worry myself; that I ought to esteem myself very fortunate. No woman, he said, has had the success that I have had, after working only a few years.

"You are celebrated; everybody knows who Mademoiselle Bashkirtseff is. You have achieved genuine success. But you would like to have two *Salons* a year, so that you could reach the pinnacle of greatness more quickly. That is natural, however, when one is ambitious. I have passed through the same thing myself."

And to-day he said:

Digitized by Google

"People see me driving with you; it is fortunate that I am ill, or else they would accuse me of painting your picture."

"Oh, they have done that already," said the architect.

"Not in the papers?"

"Oh, no!"

Wednesday, September 17th.—There are few days when I am not tormented by the recollection of my father. I ought to have gone and taken care of him until the end. He did not complain, for he was like me, but he must have cruelly felt my absence. Why did I not go?

Since the return of Bastien-Lepage, and since we have been going so often to see him, and have shown him so many little attentions, I have felt most keenly how wrong was my conduct toward my father.

In mamma's case it was different; they had been separated so long and had only come together again within the last five years; but I, his daughter?

Then God will punish me. But, to go to the root of things, after all, we owe our parents nothing, if they have not taken care of us and done everything for us from the time we entered the world.

That does not prevent, however,—but I have no time to analyze this question. Bastien-Lepage makes me feel remorse. This is a punishment from God. But if I do not believe in God? I don't know whether I do or not; but, in any case, I have a conscience, and my conscience reproaches me for what I have done.

And then one can not say with conviction: "I do not believe in God." It all depends on what we understand by the word God. If the God we love and long for existed, the world would be very different to what it is.

There is no God Who listens to my evening prayer; and yet, in spite of my reason, I pray to Him every evening.

Si le ciel est désert, nous n'offensons personne;
Si quelqu'un nous entend, qu'il nous prenne en pitié.

Digitized by Google

And yet how is it possible to believe?

Bastien-Lepage continues very ill; we found him in the Bois, his face all twisted up with pain. All the Charcots were there. It is the intention to bring some day Doctor Charcot himself, so that he can see him, as if by chance. When they went away, Bastien said that it was abominable of us to neglect him as we have done for two whole days.

Thursday, September 18th.—I have seen Julian! I have missed him very much, but it has been so long since we have seen each other that we had very little to say. He thought I looked successful and contented. There is nothing, after all, but art; nothing else deserves a single thought.

All his family are with Bastien-Lepage—his mother and his sisters—and they will remain with him until the end. They seem like kind-hearted women, but they are very talkative.

That tyrant of a Bastien-Lepage insists on my taking care of myself; he wants me to be cured of my cough in a month; he buttons up my jacket for me and worries as to whether I am dressed warmly enough or not.

Once, when all the rest of the people were sitting as usual on the left of his bed, I went and sat down on the right; he at once turned his back on the others, settled himself comfortably, and began to talk to me in a low voice about art.

Yes, he certainly feels friendship for me, and a selfish friendship, too. When I said that I was going to begin to work again to-morrow, he answered:

"Oh, not yet! You must not desert me!"

Friday, September 19th.—He is much worse. We do not know what to do, whether to leave the room or to remain, when he groans with pain and then looks up at us with a smile.

To go would seem to imply that he is very ill, and to remain and look on as he writhes in anguish is terrible.

I am afraid that I speak of this with little delicacy; it seems to me that I could find words more—I mean less— Poor fellow!

Digitized by Google

Wednesday, October 1st.—I am filled with sadness and dissatisfaction.

What is the use of writing?

My aunt went to Russia, Monday. She will arrive at 1 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Bastien-Lepage goes from bad to worse.

And I can not work.

My picture will never be finished.

Just think of it all!

He is fading away and he suffers greatly. When we see him, he seems a being beyond this earth; he is on a higher plane than us; there are days when I feel as if it were the same with me. I see people, I speak to them and they answer; but I am no longer a part of this world; I feel a calm indifference to everybody; there is no sorrow attached to it, but it is something like the dreamy state which opium produces. In short, he is dying. I go to see him only through the force of habit; he is the shadow of himself, and I, also, am half a shadow.

What is the use of anything?

He takes little notice of my presence, and I can do him no good. I have not the power to bring the light into his eyes. He is pleased to see me, and that is all. Yes, he is dying, and I am indifferent. I do not realize it, I only know something is gradually fading before my eyes.

All is over at last.

All is over.

They will bury me in 1885.

Thursday, October 9th.—I can do nothing. I have a fever all the time. My doctors are two fools. I have called in Potain and placed myself in his hands. He cured me once, and he is kind, attentive, and honest. It seems that my thinness and the other things are not the result of the trouble with my lungs. They are due to another cause, of which I have not spoken, hoping that it would pass away by itself, and I have troubled

Digitized by Google

myself only about my lungs, which are no worse than they were before.

There is no need to bother you with my ailments, however. But it is an undeniable fact that I can do nothing!

Nothing!

Yesterday I began to dress to go to the Bois, and twice I was so weak that I was ready to give it up.

But I went, all the same.

Madame Bastien-Lepage has been at Damvillers since Monday to look after the vintages, and although there are other ladies with him he is glad to see us.

Sunday, October 12th.—I have not been able to go out. I am really ill, although not in bed.

The doctor comes every other day. Since Potain's visit, he has sent his assistant.

Oh! my God, my God! And my picture, my picture, my picture!

Julian has been to see me; so they must have told him that I am ill.

Alas! how can I hide it? And how can I go to see Bastien-Lepage?

Thursday, October 16th.—I have a terrible fever, which wears me out. I pass all the day in the *salon*, changing from the sofa to an arm-chair, and back again to the sofa.

Dina reads novels to me. Potain himself came yesterday, and he will come again to-morrow. He is in no need of money, and if he comes often it must be that he takes a little interest in me.

I can not go out at all, but that poor Bastien-Lepage does; he has himself carried here, and installs himself in an arm-chair, with his legs resting on a pile of cushions; I am quite near him in another arm-chair, and so we remain until 6 o'clock.

I am dressed in a mass of lace and plush; everything is white, but of different shades. Bastien-Lepage's eyes dilate with pleasure as they rest upon me.

Digitized by Google

"Oh, if I could paint!" he says.

And I?

This year's picture will never be painted!

Saturday, October 18th.—Bastien-Lepage comes almost every day. His mother has returned, and to-day they all three were here.

Potain came yesterday; I am no better.

Sunday, October 19th.—Tony and Julian dined with us.

Monday, October 20th.—In spite of the magnificent weather, Bastien-Lepage came here instead of going to the Bois. He can scarcely walk now; his brother supports him under each arm, and almost carries him.

Once in the arm-chair, the poor fellow is for a time utterly exhausted. Heaven have pity on us both! And to think that there are porters who enjoy robust health! Emile is an excellent brother; he carries Jules on his shoulders up and down stairs to their apartment on the third story. Dina shows equal devotion to me. For the last two days my bed has been in the *salon;* but as the room is very large, and divided by screens, sofas, and the piano, it can not be seen. It is too much exertion for me to go up and down stairs.

(The journal stops here. Marie Bashkirtseff died eleven days after, the 31st of October, 1884.)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

DUE JUL 06 '88 FA

CANCELLED MAR 23 1988

SEP 26 1996

DUE OCT 15 '9

RET'D JUL 23 1996

AUG 16 1996

DUE FEB 15 '92 FA

CANCELLED JUN 16 1992

CANCELLED JUN 15 '92 FA 1992

Digitized by Google

FA4175.2.2 (1908)
Marie Bashkirtseff, the journal of
Fine Arts Library
AYO4723

FA 4175.2.2 vols. 1-2
AUTHOR
Bashkirtseff, Marie
TITLE
Journal
DATE DUE BORROWER'S NAME
PAMELA G CHESTER

FA 4175.2.2

vols. 1-2

Digitized by Google